

COUNTRY LIFE

THE JOURNAL FOR ALL INTERESTED IN
COUNTRY LIFE AND COUNTRY PURSUITS.

ILLUSTRATED.

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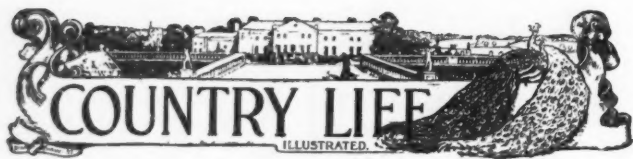
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LADY LONDONDERRY.

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THE Journal for all interested in

Country Life and Country Pursuits.

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Christmas Eve Customs.

IT was, we fancy, *Punch* who some fifty years ago invented the Christmas cynic. Previously, writers for the Press had followed an old convention, which perhaps may be compressed into a wretched pun perpetrated by Charles Leclercque, "A Christmas carol will make Care 'owl.'" But the satirical writers discovered that, in spite even of Charles Dickens, Care was not discomfited, but sat down composedly at the doorstep. Ever since it has been the fashion in some quarters to dwell on the darker aspects of Christmas. At merry Yule the tradesman gets his accounts ready, the tax-gatherer develops activity, the landlord looks for his rent, a regiment of postmen, dustmen, porters, and their kind, lie in wait for the timely Christmas-box. As to the good cheer, well, it was no doubt a treat to our rude forefathers, but in these more civilised times a man may have what he wants all the year round; and it is not everybody who can eat plum-pudding and mince-pies with impunity. Then again as regards the weather—unfortunately we cannot order it, and whether Yule be green or white seems purely a matter of chance;

the only certain thing is that it is sure to be disagreeable. Now there is a certain amount of truth in the wailings, but it is easily exaggerated. The fact is that paterfamilias has such pleasant memories of those merry Christmases of the olden time that when he sees his boys and girls begin preparing for Christmas with the same single-hearted enthusiasm that he used to feel himself, all the assumed cynicism is forgotten. He becomes thoroughly infected with their spirit, joins in the song and dance, kisses the girls under the mistletoe, eats too much plum-pudding, and prepares an indigestion that will keep him grumbling against Christmas till next December comes. If he were to clear his mind of dyspepsia, however, it is possible he would admit that of the twelve days of Yule the pleasantest is Christmas Eve. We write, be it remembered, of the country house where the amusements are within doors and no pantomime or other town distraction is in reach. During Roman Catholic times it was a fast, ending with a midnight mass, and a certain austerity mixing with its associations is probably due to that fact. It is pre-eminently a day of preparation. The curate with a bevy of fair helpers is busy in the church till dark, hanging lectern and pulpit and wall with evergreens. At home they are doing the same to the pictures. And though no longer "Forth to the woods do merry men go, to gather in the mistletoe," the girls take care that the mystic berries are not lacking. The dragging in of the Yule log has fallen into desuetude because alike in hall and cottage the modern grate is not large enough to hold one of respectable size. It is a very unromantic explanation, but, as a matter of fact, common-place reasons account for the decay of nearly all the fine old customs.

One old custom that still survives is that of carol-singing. Perhaps it may be said that is a truism, but all are not carols that are named so. Regular hymns are sung instead of the old verses that used to be issued in broadsheet during December. Moreover, the old-fashioned carol-singer was not at all like his modern counterparts, the nocturnal wait or the congregation at a church service. The business began between seven and eight o'clock on Christmas Eve, when a party assembled at a house, the mistress of which was expected to have a store of hot cakes in her oven and plenty of beer and cider on the table. Having made both the inner and the outer man comfortable, having had "a draw of the cutty," and discussed the news of the day, they began to sing a selection of those curious verses in which the Founder of Christianity, good cookery, and strong drink are impartially praised in the same kindly, simple, and very irreverent manner. "I know you do not hate good cheer, nor liquor that is strong," is the exordium in which one begins, and expresses the spirit of many. The carol, in fact, was as much a drinking song as a hymn, though many, such as the favourite but never hackneyed "Good King Wenceslas," partook equally of the nature of a ballad. For Christmas Eve, however, the long-established favourite is "The Lord at first did Adam make out of the dust and clay." Here, as in the various Boar's Head carols, "I pray you, my masters, be merry," is the one petition that stands boldly out. If there are touches of grotesqueness and buffoonery in the merriment, these do not come from any positive wish to mock the festival, but are interesting survivals from old time. To illustrate this one could scarcely get a better illustration than in the most characteristic of all Christmas Eve customs, that of mumming or guisarding. Parts of it carry us back to pre-Christian times. One indispensable character, for instance, is the Bessy, a boy dressed up in his sister's petticoats. In the Roman Saturnalia and kindred festivities the prime jest consisted in disguising the sexes, so that women went about in togas and men in women's gowns. The early missionaries did not attempt the impossible task of sweeping away all Pagan observances, they only tried to engraft upon them those of the new religion. Bessy, therefore, whose original business was to herald the advent of the Lord of Misrule, after being adopted into the miracle play, still continued to announce that "here come in a pack of fools—a pack of fools behind the door." No doubt, again, the white shirts in which the mummers attired themselves were originally meant to imitate the vestment of those priests who used to go a-mumming from house to house on Christmas Eve. They jested, they sang, they drank, they related to fine ladies *contes drolatiques* that would scarce be permitted in a smoking-room to-day, and yet were able to retain a sincere and simple belief in God, the Bible, and Holy Church.

These customs now are interesting to the antiquarian only. And yet when the old message rings out, a message that, independent of all systems and creeds, breathes the very spirit of brotherhood, "Peace on earth, goodwill to men," happy are they who are preparing to eat "the umbles of the doe and all that ever come in" within the walls of an ancient country house. Some of the usages are forgotten. No longer outside the church porch in Yorkshire do men hang a sheaf of corn on Christmas Eve, that on the morrow the birds may have their share of good eating; no longer on that night does the Norfolk farmer go forth and solemnly pour a jug of spiced ale on the meadows to make mother earth rejoice in her heart and labour more cheerfully for the spring; no longer does the Devonian carry out hot wheaten

cakes and cider, warmed and mixed with eggs, as an oblation to the orchard trees. The heir "with roses in his shoes" does not dangle after the village beauty. But these changes are only incidents of progress. There is a certain absurdity in keeping up observances in the letter when the spirit is gone. Yet all that is best about Christmas remains. When the bells ring out at twelve o'clock we do not believe, as our forefathers did, that they are sounding a triumph over the demons of the wood, the trolls, and that other evil spirits are flying in dismay at the birth of Christ. What has survived all this superstition is the genuine feeling that this is the appropriate time for families to draw together, and old memories and old friendships to be renewed. One of the pleasantest customs that has grown up within recent times is in large country houses to make Christmas Eve the night of the servants' ball. We know one house where that has been done for twenty-five years. This Christmas Eve, if all be well, the hostess of it will once more be led out to the first dance by the gamekeeper. Perhaps they will not be quite so active as they were a quarter of a century ago, when she was a slim bride of a few months standing, and he a stripling appointed by the young squire, who had been taught to shoot by his father. He is stout, and a little rheumatic with lying out at nights and watching poachers, and she has a handsome daughter by her side, and a son not long come of age. But they will both dance with as much pleasure, if not quite the same agility, as ever. Among those that look on will be a silver-haired man. We mention him because his case is that of a minority who deserve our sympathy. While daylight is failing he has often been seen at his study window gazing wistfully over fields whereon darkness was falling, and listening, perchance, to the wind as it moans and whistles about the graves in the adjoining churchyard. Let him not be disturbed. He is not the only one to whom Christmas brings a memory of bereavement. After struggling with and fighting down his own grief, he forces it aside, and lends the encouragement of his kindly glance to more fortunate merry-makers. The young and light-hearted take his presence as a matter of course, but it reminds the more thoughtful that Christmas for the individual has dark as well as pleasant associations. Yet he and those like him will be none the worse for laying their sorrows aside.



THIS is a black Christmas indeed for that first of English gentlemen and sportsmen, and that kindly and warm-hearted man, the Prince of Wales. During the past few days he has lost, in Mr. Christopher Sykes and Baron Ferdinand de Rothschild, two of the closest friends of his life-time; and in both the country at large, and the agricultural community in particular, lose valuable helpers. Of Baron Ferdinand de Rothschild, at whose house, by the way, the Prince of Wales met with his troublesome accident of the earlier part of the year, we give in another column a portrait and a character sketch.

The season for shooting the big stags and the many pointers is past and gone, but that is by no means to say that the stalker's season is over. There are not a few who think the stalking of the "yeld" hind far more exciting work than the stalking of a royal. It is always the hinds that are the wary ones. A stag by himself is the easiest stalk of all. So it requires more than the normal skill and cunning of the stalker to bring these ladies to bag. They are just coming to their best now. About Christmas-time they are at their fattest. An added excitement to stalking is the frequent presence of snow on the hills at this time of year. Sliding down the snow-clad sides of the hills is exciting enough for anybody, the more so as an occasional out-jagging rock is liable to rend the slider sorely. *A propos*, they have a way in Cashmir of going down the slides that might give a hint to the British stalker. The wise hunter there makes his shikari slide down first, and, by way of self-preservation, seats himself on the tails of the shikari's garments and slides down behind him with his legs on either side the man's body. In this way the responsibility for safe and successful steering is

piled on the back of the native-born—a back well able to bear it. So may the shooter seat himself on his stalker's coat-tails and glide down behind him with comparatively little risk.

The Briton does not look on the French, as a nation, in the light of a people whose views on sport are greatly worth considering; but, for all that, they have ways of telling the age of a stag, or of any deer, that are not in the recognised philosophy of our Scottish stalkers. They judge preferably by the hock and the hoof rather than the head and the teeth, and the results seem to be quite as trustworthy. Also, they claim to be able to tell you the track of a "yeld" hind from that of a hind with young, the one over-reaching, while the other does not. It is very certain that the shooting of the "yeld" hinds is good for the stock in the forest. If they be not shot the numbers of the deer are apt to increase beyond all that the ground will carry, with a result to be summed up as "disease and death."

Never, even on the football-field, which is fruitful of surprises, were the prophecies of the critics more utterly falsified than at the Queen's Club on Wednesday of last week, when the stalwart forwards of the Cambridge Rugby Union fifteen pushed the Oxford team to and fro as if they had been children, and did with them as they pleased. There is really nothing to be said of the game, except that the Dark Blues, fair and full of promise as their previous performances had been, were simply hopelessly outclassed forward, and that their backs had but few opportunities. The injury to the Oxford captain no doubt handicapped the team to some extent, and it will prevent him from playing for some little time. But the issue of the game was never for a moment in doubt. The record now stands—Oxford, 10 wins; Cambridge, 9 wins; drawn games, 7.

"He was handed over to his mother, who said that at the period of the full moon he was always unreliable." So runs the report. He was not a boy who had stolen apples; there was no hope that his mother would try the effect of a bundle of birch twigs "held loosely in the hand"—as Dr. Butler used to say—upon him. On the contrary, he was thirty-two years of age, and he had perpetrated flagrant deeds. First he had said that he was Lord Charles Beatty. He was really Charles Wood. In the character of Lord Charles Beatty he had called upon the Croydon Borough accountants, demanding to be paid £100, three years' arrears of an alleged washing bill. Imagine the horror of a civic functionary at such an outrage, and the feelings of a man of figures and accounts at the mere suggestion of such irregularity. There are, however, advantages about the case. It teaches us one of the possible meanings of the impossible word "unreliable"; but Mr. Wood must be looked after at the time of the full moon. Some magistrates might think that a lunatic asylum was best suited to this lunar kleptomaniac.

It was imagined that the case of the Rev. G. D. Grundy, whom the Queen congratulated when he celebrated the Diamond Jubilee of his incumbency, was unique; but the *Globe* has unearthed an even longer tenure than his one ecclesiastical office. The Rev. Mr. Sharp was Perpetual Curate of Horbury in 1834; the Rev. Canon Sharp, the same man, but sixty-four years older, is Perpetual Curate of Horbury now. Moreover, he is but eighty-seven, whereas Mr. Grundy is three years his senior in age. Truly there is some real meaning in that word perpetual.

One cannot avoid a feeling of sympathy for the bats which once infested the parish church of Swineshead, near Boston, in Lincolnshire. According to the *Daily Mail* they were a source of annoyance to the vicar and to the parishioners, until the vicar's son found a means of exterminating them. Observing their habits with a care worthy of a better cause, he noticed that they, after flying round and round the church, and then making a dive, squeezed themselves through a cleft at the top of the west door. Thereupon, says our contemporary, the ingenious youth made unto himself a circular net, using the hoop of a child to spread it upon, and the result was "orful slorter"—111 bats killed in an hour and a-quarter. To which we say, "What a cruel pity!" Some people dislike bats, no doubt; and it is the fact that they are troublesome when they fly into a room and get entangled in a lady's hair. But they are harmless, and, since they are insectivorous, useful. Nothing would have been easier than to devise a contrivance by which they could have escaped by the cleft over the west door but could not have come back again. As it is, Swineshead will probably be visited by a plague of flies next summer, and it deserves it.

The dinner on the occasion of the Diamond Jubilee of the Thames Angling Preservation Society was interesting, and it was satisfactory. It was satisfactory as showing how very much had been done of late for the angler in the Thames, and the improved condition of the river in consequence of those doings. Mr. Shrubsole, though not on this occasion, announced his intention of turning into the river a large number of young rainbow

trout, and though the chairman of the Preservation Society's dinner, Mr. Harry Lawson, expressed his doubts whether the Thames would ever again be made a salmon river, there can be no question but that the prospects of Father Thames, from the angler's point of view, are brighter than they have been for many years. As regards the prospects for the immediate moment, all the rivers have been enjoying a thorough wash out by the recent floods, and when these have settled down there ought to be good fishing for the coarser fish.

One or two curious fishing yarns—true tales be it known—are contributed by the year 1898, and notably the following from the Test. A member of the Stockbridge Club, fishing with the very finest tackle, rose to the May-fly, and landed in about 20 min., a salmon of some 11 lb. weight. This was only about five miles below Stockbridge, and may be taken as a record performance. Again the same angler rose a fish, and striking a shade too hard, as the fish met the line, broke the fine tackle. At the next cast the fish rose again, and was taken with the other fly in his mouth. This fish was gorged with May-fly, and with—*mirabile dictu*—two young things that were either baby dabchicks or baby moorhens. And this in the very thick of the May-fly season! This glutton weighed 4 lb., but could hardly fight at all, so gorged was he. The third tale has been already told in these columns—the capture, below the Doctor's house, of the well-known 11-pounder. He was absolutely carnivorous in his tastes, feeding on odds and ends from the house, and it was to the bait of a bit of raw meat that he finally fell a victim.

Wood-pigeons at this time of year often go in great flocks, but this year for some reason the numbers in which they have congregated together seem beyond all precedent. Flocks of many thousands have been seen by the present writer, and others to whom he has spoken bear evidence of having seen the like. The abundance of acorns may perhaps have something to do with it, but the acorn season is a little over, yet still the pigeons are collected in their myriads. Wiseacres tell us that this—among other portents—is a sign of a very severe winter, but the severity has not yet made itself felt. For all that, it is significant that our most severe winters lately have followed abnormally mild weather in November and December.

It may be worth while to point out an objection to the plan, adopted by most of those who have coverts in which there are a good many wild pheasants, of picking up as many eggs as they can collect early in the season, trusting to the birds to make good this act of spoliation later on. No doubt they will do so; and no doubt in this way a supply of good eggs is obtained for hatching out. At the same time, it is no less certain that the wild birds, with the best will in the world, cannot make up the arrears till rather late in the season, and the consequence is that your wild birds are apt to be rather small and late. The wild pheasant, as a rule, is a more brave and high-flying bird than the tame reared one. If we could stock our coverts entirely with wild birds it is certain that we should do so, and it does not seem altogether a good policy to decrease the strength of the wild stock in this way when the alternative is open to us of buying early eggs and leaving the wild pheasants to bring up their own first families unmolested.



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THE LATE MR. J. HURRELL.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

There is tribulation in some of those Southern Counties where the business of turkey growing is reduced to a science. To a science it is reduced, but not by any means to an exact science, and it is just this subtle distinction that is at the root of all the tribulation. The turkey defies calculation. He is always delicate during the first three weeks of his life, and then he does fairly well until the time comes for his preparation for market—that is to say until the fattening time. There is no doubt when this fattening time must be. Christmas-tide is the date at which the demand for fattened turkeys is the greatest. And it really does seem as if the birds were perfectly aware of the fact. The diet that they will condescend to take and grow fat on is only to be determined by experiment in each individual case. What one turkey will gobble with enthusiasm another will absolutely decline, and what one will gobble one day the same bird will refuse on the next. They are very difficult always; but this year it seems that they are more difficult than usual. Either the turkey is beginning to learn that if he can deny himself sufficiently to remain lean till Christmas-tide is past he may have a chance of being spared, or else it is a matter of heredity and survival of the fittest—those turkeys that have abstained till Christmas was over surviving to perpetuate the species, and to perpetuate a species with an inherited taste towards starvation until the New Year. These be ingenious speculations, but in the meantime it is likely that we shall have lean turkeys to our Christmas dinners, so far as the supply of them is drawn from certain of the recognised nurseries.

It is long since the country looked as it does this year on Christmas Eve. The wheat shows a wonderful plant, and one may go over hundreds of acres and not see a bare spot. The crop looks wonderfully strong and well. This and the fine weather has had an adverse effect on the trade, and fine wheats, weighing 64 lb. and 65 lb. to the bushel, are being sold in the country markets at 25s. and 26s. per quarter. At these prices wheat of this year's splendid quality ought to pay for holding.

There have been enormous supplies of foreign poultry in the London markets during the present week. Our Christmas poultry and game now comes literally from all over the world. Canada is sending some very fine turkeys, whilst Australian rabbits are present by the ton. During the past few years an enormous trade has sprung up in turkeys and chickens from the Balkan States. These come right across Europe for shipment at Hamburg and Antwerp at railway rates which make our own look scandalous. Italy, France, Germany, and Russia also contribute to our Christmas larder.

It is very rarely that an illustration is included in our "Country Notes," but the sad death of the man portrayed in the accompanying picture calls for exceptional treatment. Hardly a month ago an artist attached to COUNTRY LIFE took the photograph of William John Hurrell, the staunch first whip of the Puckeridge Hunt, as he sat, full of life and vigour, on his horse by the covert-side. On the following Saturday Captain George Sholto Douglas and Mr. Gosling, of Hassobury, were riding back from hunting and coming away from Capon's Wood by way of Beauchamp's Farm, in the vicinity of which Hurrell had last been seen alive. As they came to the little bridge across the Quin they noticed first a horse in the water, about 200 yds. below the bridge. On the bank were a couple of wistful hounds. They looked some time before they saw more. Then their eyes were caught by the sight of a pink coat sodden with water. In effect they had found the body of poor Hurrell, who had met his death by drowning in the pursuit of his occupation. How he came by it, whether he was stunned before he fell into the water or what happened to him, nobody knows. But what is certain is that a faithful servant of sport died in the performance of his duty; and that he left a widow and an orphan child, and that Mr. Tresham Gilbey, of The Grange, Bishop's Stortford, or Major H. A. Anderson, of Aspenden, Buntingford, will be glad to receive subscriptions.

It is really not a little surprising that more owners of shootings in which rabbits play any important part do not try the experiment of introducing the so-called Belgian hares. In all shootings that we have knowledge of on which the experiment has been tried, it has proved a great success. The infusion of alien blood cannot fail to benefit the stock, and the cross produces a coney considerably bigger than the native bunny, and certainly as good when he comes to table. It is also a consideration that the greater size of the crossed breed gives

just those extra few inches by which we are so apt to shoot behind the white tail of our rabbit as he bolts across the ride. We shall be very pleased to hear from any of our readers who have made the experiment, and especially pleased to hear of any "cons"; for our own experience seems to have shown us all the "pros." If the argument were all "pros," we cannot but think that we should see the experiment—no longer, in that case, in its experimental stage, perhaps—more often tried.

Mrs. Hope Johnstone's Shetlands.

THE position occupied by the Shetland pony in the equine world is altogether unique, as the patronage bestowed by the public on these excellent animals is no sentimental expression of a predilection in favour of a very small and very sturdy little horse, but is rather a testimony to merits which, in their own particular way, are unsurpassed. The Shetland, in fact, is a remarkable combination of strength, fine constitution, longevity, and intelligence, as in the first place no animal of his inches can perform more arduous duties than the Sheltie, whilst he thrives upon a fare that would be insufficient to satisfy most ponies. In the intelligence which he brings to bear upon the fulfilment of his daily duties, the Shetland stands unrivalled; for

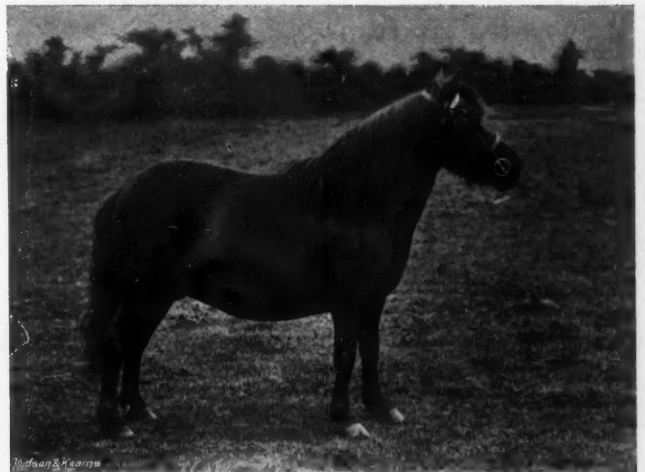


C. Reid, Wishaw, N.B.

SKYLARK.

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though, like most small animals, he possesses his full share of obstinacy and self-conceit, the Sheltie really seems as though he has somehow acquired a faculty for distinguishing right from wrong, and he certainly possesses means for displaying his acquiescence or the reverse in the restraint that may be put



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SAPPHIRE.

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upon his movements. In fact—and most breeders will bear this statement out—the Shetland pony, unless his spirit has been broken by oppression, is capable of resenting an injustice, whilst at the same time he can be induced to obey a person in whom he has confidence even more easily than most other varieties of horse-flesh.

As may be imagined from the name he bears, the Sheltie is an inhabitant of the northern isles of Scotland, upon which he has flourished from time immemorial, picking up a bare existence upon the scanty herbage which is to be found in the summer, whilst during the inclement winter months his struggles for a living are often painfully acute. The climate of the Shetland Isles, too, can scarcely be regarded as conducive to the comfort of horse-flesh exposed to the rigours of a winter on the hills; but the constitutions of the ponies are proof against storms and snow, doubtless because the weakly ones have all died off, thereby providing strong evidence of the correctness of Darwin's theory of the survival of the fittest. At all events, an unsound Sheltie



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SWEETS TO THE SWEET.

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is practically unknown, whilst it is evident that the hard lives they lead on their native hills provide a reason for their smallness of stature, as there is generally a tendency on their part to increase in height if fed on rich grass and corn and housed in warm stables.

Beyond all doubt the Shetland pony is not only a pure breed, but it is a very ancient one, and consequently the fact that the colours of the little horses vary so considerably is a matter for reflection. In addition to browns, blacks, and bays, dun-coloured Shelties are common, and piebalds by no means infrequent, this being a state of affairs which obtains in no other wild breed. The remarkable strength of these ponies causes them to be in great request amongst owners of coal-mines for work underground; but the Sheltie is too good for such drudgery, especially as in the capacity of a child's first pony he knows no equal, whilst his value as a harness-horse for ladies is fully appreciated by those who have had experience of him. Consequently the popularity of the Shetland pony is rapidly increasing, and therefore the stud which Mrs. Wentworth Hope Johnstone has established and managed so successfully at Can Hatch, Banstead, Surrey, commands the sympathetic interest of horse-breeders of all denominations. This stud was founded upon a basis that must command success, as no price, however high, has deterred Mrs. Hope Johnstone from acquiring the best-bred and the best-looking mares that could be obtained, and consequently the appearance of the Can Hatch Shetlands in the show-ring is usually attended by the most satisfactory results. Mrs. Hope Johnstone has moreover accomplished much in the way of persuading the English public that Shetland ponies are capable



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CATTIOWL AND CHAMPION.

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of higher things than dragging miniature trucks in coal-mines or carrying children about in pinniers. The charming illustration of herself, with two of her prime favourites, CATTIOWL AND CHAMPION, harnessed to a miniature wagonette, will convince the public that the Shelties may be utilised for light harness work. It may be added, too, that the little horses can trot at a rate of speed which is disquieting to the feelings of staid policemen, whilst as regards their claims to be accepted as typical specimens of their breed, it may be added that Cattiowl, the roan pony, in addition to gaining honours in harness in a class of 13h. ponies, won second prize at the Crystal Palace



C. Reid, Wishaw, N.B. LAVOLTA ON HIS NATIVE HEATH.

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Show in a Shetland class for stallions, mares, and geldings. LAVOLTA, the stallion depicted first as he appeared upon his native heath, and subsequently after he had been subjected to the civilising influences of dandy brush and curry comb, is an altogether remarkable little horse, as, though four years old only, he stands 29in. at the shoulder. His sire is Oman and his dam Lief, and this rich-coloured, tan-muzzled little brown created quite a sensation when he won reserve prize at the Crystal Palace Show last summer; in fact, at the urgent request of several lady visitors he was brought into the pavilion for them to admire.

It is a very difficult matter to express an opinion regarding the comparative excellences of Mrs. Hope Johnstone's famous Shetland pony mares, but probably the black four year old SAPHIRE, sire Odin, dam Sweetie, is the one upon which most experts would fix their fancy. At all events, her merits were sufficiently pronounced for her present mistress to purchase her from the Marquess of Londonderry at the price of £100, and as she has won seven first prizes and medals at such shows as those of the Highland Agricultural Society, held at



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LAVOLTA GROOMED.

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Kelso, and at the Crystal Palace, there is very little doubt that she was bought within her value.

In the five year old SKYLARK, by Lord of the Isles, dam Scada, Mrs. Hope Johnstone possesses a wonderfully well-bred little pony, as will be judged by the fact that her sire was sold to go to America for £200, his loss being still deplored by British Shetland breeders. Skylark, moreover, has succeeded in making a very considerable reputation for herself in the show world, as she was second at the Royal Agricultural Society's Show at Manchester in 1896, second at Edinburgh Show last June, and second at the Crystal Palace Show, her stable companion, Sapphire, having occupied the first position in each instance. Skylark was also placed third at the Royal Agricultural Society's Show at Four Oaks Park this year, in a mixed class of mountain ponies not exceeding 12h. 2in., and third at the Royal Highland Society's Kelso Show. The remaining pony mare, EMERALD, is, like Sapphire, a daughter of Odin, and this typical little five year old would no doubt have made a great name for herself in the showing this year, but unfortunately she contracted a severe illness after foaling, and it was therefore impossible to exhibit her, as had been intended.



C. Reid, Wishaw, N.B.

EMERALD.

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favourite hunter in his box, but it is to be regretted that he could not be taken in the paddock with the ponies, as



C. Reid, Wishaw, N.B.

THE FAVOURITE GREY.

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Emerald possesses a most extraordinary action for a pony of 37½in. high, whilst her speed is so great that she has been included in the prize list of a pace and action class in which far taller animals competed. And moreover, in spite of illness, she was a prize-winner at the Kelso Show last summer. The remaining pony illustration is one which shows Mrs. Hope Johnstone engaged in the congenial occupation of feeding her Shelties, which are evidently enjoying the contents of her basket, whilst the foal, not having attained an age which permits him to indulge in luxuries, is making believe that he possesses a contempt for delicacies in general and his mistress's tit-bits in particular. The last illustration shows Mrs. Hope Johnstone's Shelties are very small and very good, so good, in fact, that any visitor to the South of England who admires Shetlands and omits to visit the Can Hatch Stud will be missing a sight of one of the finest collections of his favourite breed that judgment and money have ever united to bring together.

BETWEEN THE FLAGS.

ONE of the most difficult problems of racing under National Hunt Rules is that of catering for bad horses. Very bad animals are not persevered with under flat-racing rules; they are either put to jumping or sold into slavery. In the former case we see them out over hurdles and fences in the winter, and although some of them become experts at the new game, since very bad horses indeed on the flat have often made high-class jumpers, the rank and file are no better at one sport than the other. That there must always be some bad horses is of course obvious, and if the game is to be kept alive these must be catered for as well as their higher-class companions. There are no two places where this is better done than at Plumpton and Lingfield Park, at both of which, although the small prizes given cannot be expected to attract the swagger performers, good management and attractive programmes invariably produce pleasant meetings and big fields. The latest meeting at the pleasant little Surrey fixture began, on Tuesday of last week, with a field of eight going to the post for the Youngsters' Hurdle Race of 38 sovs., for three year olds, as its name denotes. Of these Black Maria and Allglow were made joint favourites, but the latter could only finish fifth, whilst the former had to put up with a neck defeat by Merry Pilgrim, a chestnut daughter of the beautifully-bred Lourdes, who had 7lb. the best of the weights with Lord Denman's filly. Allglow has not yet learnt how to jump hurdles properly. Lord Percy was once thought to be a very good horse indeed, and probably was until he became a rogue; but he can still gallop when he likes, and being in a better temper than usual on the Tuesday, he smothered six very moderate opponents, for speed, in the run in for the Cowden Selling Steeplechase, and won by a couple of lengths, being subsequently sold for 120 guineas. I think that 1,200 guineas was what he once fetched. It is a curious fact that both these Lingfield winners, Merry Pilgrim and Lord Percy, had run second at Plumpton three days earlier.

The two principal events of the afternoon were the three-mile Southern Counties Handicap Steeplechase of 57 sovs. and the Winter Handicap Hurdle Race of 62 sovs. For the first of these nine numbers went up, and a favourite was soon found in Exodos. Lord Lytton was backed at 4 to 1, as was Olibanum, who represented the Bishop Sutton stable in preference to President, and some people fancied Vet.-Major Edwards's Cloonflyn. The favourite's

backers soon knew their fate, as, in company with Innishannon, he refused the first fence, and was taken back to the paddock. Entering the straight the second time the outsider Senlac, Olibanum, and Greenmount were all together, the first of whom won by four lengths, a good race between the other two for second place resulting in Greenmount getting the best of it by a head. Lord Lytton finished fourth, and Cloonflyn was tailed off. It was a very bad betting race, and I doubt if the fielders profited much by the victory of the outsider. The Winter Hurdle Race brought out eleven runners, one of whom, the thievish old Bach, was once a fair performer on the flat. Exning Belle was made favourite, but she never threatened danger, and at the last hurdles the race lay between Bach, Sicily Queen, and Barbara. Whether Bach would have fought it out had he been pressed, it is impossible to say, but everything being made easy for him by Sicily Queen trying to bolt, he got away too far to be caught, and won by a length and a-half from Mr. Hibbert's mare, who had lost a lot of ground before R. Nightingall could get her straight again, with Barbara third, three lengths behind. The American-bred four year old, New Hampshire, beat a big field of terribly bad horses in the Selling Hurdle Race, and was subsequently sold to the Lewes trainer, Escott, for 220 guineas, apparently a great deal more than he is worth; and then another American representative, Rigo, a four year old son of Longfellow, won the Covert Side Steeplechase by six lengths from Ocean Spray. The betting on this event was very close between Rigo and Baslow, the latter of whom had beaten Josephus at Hawthorn Hill earlier in the month. But for jumping very badly he would probably have won again at Lingfield, but falling three fences from home, he left Rigo to win as he liked.

Fields were bigger than ever on the second day, especially in the two selling races, which brought out no fewer than thirty starters between them. For the first race of the day, the Novices' Steeplechase, of 33 sovs., run over two miles, Josephus, who won the Priory Steeplechase at Sandown Park early in the month, was naturally made favourite, and he got home just a head in front of Juggler II., who broke down at the last fence, and three others. This is a promising young jumper by Favo, and he may make a useful horse over a country some day, whilst his two recent victories enhance the form of

Mr. Swan's four year old Baslow, who beat him at Hawthorn Hill, and who looks like making a very smart chaser when he has learnt to jump a country properly. The last-named colt was pulled out to oppose Parma Violet, at 23lb. for the year between them, in the Stewards' Handicap Steeplechase. Exodos and Innishannon, who had refused the first fence the previous day, were also of the party, whilst those two old opponents, President and Model, made up the half-dozen. In such a lot as this the Irish mare was naturally made favourite, and jumping in fine form all the way, she won easily by four lengths from Baslow, who fenced much better than he had done on the previous afternoon. President and Model were respectively third and fourth, whilst Exodos and Innishannon were tailed off and pulled up. The winner is a very nice mare, and although not a big one, can evidently carry weight. She will win plenty more races in her own class, and Baslow will improve on this form with practice.

Pleasant weather and an attractive card were responsible for a large attendance at Gatwick on Thursday, and a capital afternoon's sport was the result. The principal event of the afternoon was the National Hurdle Race, for which Ben Armine was found to be a very strong order, seeing that, but for a mistake at the last hurdle, he would have won the Grand Annual Hurdle Race at Sandown Park, instead of succumbing by a head to Turkish Bath. Accordingly, he started at 13 to 8 on, that confirmed old rogue Regret being well supported by his friends at 3 to 1, and nothing else fancied but the two. Regret looked in first-class trim, and ran well too for a long way, but he turned it up before reaching the straight, where the favourite went to the front, and shaking off Bayreuth from the final hurdles, won fairly comfortably by a couple of lengths. That a horse of Regret's class should be beaten in a race like this, only shows that he runs no more generously over hurdles than he did on the flat. For this I was quite prepared when he was first put to jumping, and I wrote in these notes at the time that were he mine I should put him over fences at once, and run him over a country, instead of in hurdle-races. In that case he would very likely have won a Grand National some day, if he had taken kindly to jumping, which could have been made a certainty of by giving him a season's hunting.

I have known and ridden a large number of "thieves" on the flat that had their attention turned to jumping, and my experience has been that only a few of them ran any more gamely over hurdles than they had done when there was nothing to jump. There is not enough difference in the two games to make them forget that they hate racing. Over a country, on the other hand, there is this difference. Most horses, unless they have been spoilt, like jumping fences, and it gives them something to think about, whilst steeplechases are not run so fast as hurdle races, and horses running in them are not kept so continuously on the stretch. The result is that I have known many incorrigible "thieves" on the flat that were as game as could be over a country. If a young thoroughbred does not take kindly to jumping fences in his schools, a season's hunting will soon make him do so, and I have never yet seen a young blood 'un that could not jump of his own accord to be with hounds.

But to return to Gatwick and its December Meeting, the first event of which, the Novices' Steeplechase, was won by Mr. C. S. Newton's Magic Lantern. We do not often see Mr. Newton patronising National Hunt sport in these days, though there was a time when he was one of the best of all gentlemen riders. He had a remarkably neat, elegant seat, and very fine hands, and he will probably be remembered best in connection with his friend Mr. C. A. Egerton's good horse St. Aubyn. Mr. Vyner's well-bred four year old, Yorkmint, was naturally made favourite, but extinguished his chance by a mistake three fences from home. Josephus, who started second favourite, at 5 to 2, did not run up to his Sandown and Lingfield form, Bayard fell at the first fence, Martello at the second, Abbeyhill refused, and Magic Lantern beat Greystone by a head, with Faute de Mieux next, three lengths behind the leading pair. With one or two exceptions, this cannot truthfully be called a promising lot of novices. Athliath's Kempton victory was the cause of his being backed at 6 to 4 for the Ruspur Hurdle Race, which looked a good thing for him if he did not break down. Unfortunately this is just what he did, and it will be a thousand pities if this once promising young jumper has come to the end of his career. Moltke, by Orvieto—Molda, fell at Lingfield, but that experience had evidently done him good, and, jumping safely here, he won by three-parts of a length from Merry Mood, with Deviliet third. These three are all three year olds, and the winner looks like being useful at the game. He was bought in decidedly cheaply at 170 guineas.

If ever a race looked a good thing, it was the Pegasus Steeplechase for the four year old Lexington, who had made such a promising *début* over fences at Sandown Park, and backers eagerly laid 6 to 5 on him. Once more were they met by disaster, as their champion came to grief at the very first fence, and Pope's Eye sharing his fate soon afterwards, Lord Audley had only Chevy Chase to dispose of, which he did very easily by ten lengths. The winner, who is by Balliol, in my opinion the best sire of jumpers at the stud, was bought by his present owner, Mr. Arthur Yates, at Aldershot, and he was lucky to have his path cleared of two such dangerous opponents as Lexington and Pope's Eye. The latter, I am sorry to hear, broke his leg, and had to be destroyed. He was a very promising young chaser by St. Simon, and it is hard lines for Mr. Swan to have lost him in such an unlucky manner. This concluded the afternoon's sport, and filled to overflowing the cup of disaster for backers. In three of the six events the favourite was an odds on chance, whilst the prices backers had to take about the other three were 2 to 1, 6 to 4, and 6 to 4. Out of the whole of these Ben Armine, who started at 13 to 8 on, was the only one who pulled them through.

If the first day at Gatwick was a bad one for backers, the second was worse, and not a single favourite got home all day. Not only that, but Royston Crow, a very good chaser indeed, and who could hardly have missed taking the Metropolitan Steeplechase, for which he started a hot favourite, fell, five furlongs from home, and broke his neck. This was a cruel piece of bad luck for his popular owner, Mr. P. Maynard. Nor did the grief end here. Dead Level, generally a safe conveyance, came to grief early in the race, and Greenmount made a mistake two fences from home. Orange Pip and Barsac were then left to fight out the issue, the first-named winning by a neck. The winner is by Ascetic, the sire of so many good jumpers, and he is evidently a promising five year old, but it was a very different class of field that he beat to those we used to see running for this once important steeplechase in the good old Woodside days. The first event of the afternoon, the Winter Steeplechase, looked a good thing for Sweet Charlotte, in spite of her 12st. 5lb., but for some reason or another she was made so much use of that she could scarcely raise an effort in the straight, and Punch Ladie, who had been nearly 200yds. behind her, got up between the last two fences, and beat her by a couple of lengths. The winner is a nice young chaser, but I doubt if he would have beaten the Irish mare had she been differently ridden.

OUTPOST.

Our Portrait Illustration.

OUR frontispiece is a fine portrait of one of the best known and the most clever of the great ladies of the United Kingdom, the Marchioness of Londonderry. Before her marriage to the Marquess of Londonderry, in 1875, she was Lady Theresa Susey Helen Chetwynd-Talbot, and she is the eldest daughter of the nineteenth Earl of Shrewsbury. *Mens sana in corpore sano* would seem to be the guiding principle of Lady Londonderry's life. Few ladies are more widely read or better equipped with knowledge of the best literature of the day; she is a keen politician, and is known to exercise substantial influence in politics; and she is, we must be permitted to say, a remarkably witty woman and a mistress of quick repartee. At Seaham, and Wynyard, and Mount Stewart she has been the hostess of Royal personages times without number, yet her kindly attention to the humblest guest is invariable. Lady Londonderry is an accomplished yachtswoman, and her favourite occupation "is to navigate and to steer with her own hand a beautiful centre-board boat on the land-locked but dangerous waters of Strangford Lough. She is beloved and admired by all who know her, and an ardent supporter of every good cause.



GROWING TOBACCO.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—This year I grew and sun-dried about 2lb. weight of Virginian tobacco. Would you kindly tell me the best way to turn it into smoking tobacco. The points I particularly want to know are: What liquor should be mixed with the leaves, and for how long; what pressure must be used, and what length of time is necessary?—W. G. P.

[We believe that growing and preparing tobacco for personal use, *i.e.*, for smoking, is illegal. The Inland Revenue permits the use of home-grown tobacco for fumigating, but even for that purpose it is poor stuff, far inferior to the tobacco paper or other fumigating material sold by horticultural dealers. As compared with imported and manufactured tobaccos, the material for smoking you would obtain from home-produced leaves would be little better than from cabbages. In hot countries the leaf becomes more matured, and the real flavouring such as smokers appreciate is the result of adding other preparations. Perhaps some reader can answer our correspondent. We once smoked a cigar made from English tobacco, but for the first and last time.—ED.]

CHRISTMAS GAMES.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I, too, have been very much interested in your Christmas games articles, and quite agree with Mr. King that both you and the writer deserve to be congratulated for the clear way in which he has described different games. His ability is brought home to me more strongly by the fact that I have attempted to write a description of an old game to which he does not refer, and out of which much fun can be obtained, and I can assure you that, like many another thing, it is not so easy a matter as it looks. However, I will do my best, and my only apology for trespassing on your space and your readers' patience is the belief that a knowledge of the game of which I speak will add to the stock of amusements at this festive season of the year. The assembled company are asked by the performer to write down, horizontally, a row of figures—of course without allowing him to see them—then to add them together, and subtract the sum from the row first written. If from the result any one of the figures be now struck out, and he is informed of the remaining figures, which should be given him slowly, *but in any order*, he will mention the precise figure which has been struck out. So far all is straight sailing, but to describe the method by which the audience is astonished is not so smooth. Unlike the conjurer, who says he will but never does, I will endeavour to show "how it's done," but must leave it to others to say what law governs the answer. The performer gets his answer by adding together the figures he is given, dividing this sum by nine, and deducting the remainder from nine. To quote an instance, I will suppose the figures given the performer are 736852. These add up to thirty-one; he divides this thirty-one by nine, into which it goes three times and four over; if this four is deducted from nine, five can be given as the struck-out figure. When there is *nothing* over, the answer may either be a cypher or a nine, but it is easy enough to pass off the apparent mistake and give the other figure if one is incorrect. Of course, the longer the string of figures chosen by the company the more the credit given to the performer, although it is no more difficult than when there are few figures.—M. L. JENKINS.

[We thank our correspondent for his letter. The explanation of the game is that the company deduct the units from their row of chosen figures, and thus produce a row of figures of which nine is an exact divisor, and with which the performer has to deal. When one of these figures is taken away, it is only necessary to find out by dividing the total sum of the remaining figures the one wanted to make another complete nine.—ED.]

MOTTOES FOR SUNDIALS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—A sundial now in my garden has along its northern edge the words "Homo quasi umbra," and on the southern edge "Monstrat in silentio." The date is 1801. "W. Keall fecit—north latitude 53deg. 4min., 5min. west longitude." I should be glad to see instructions for adjusting sundials published.—G. CHRISTOPHER DAVIES.

A SCOTCH TERRIER AND CAT AS CLOSE FRIENDS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The interesting illustration in your journal of the 12th ultimo, of a badger cub and a fox-terrier pup amicably taking a meal together, induces me to send you a photograph of a Scotch terrier, Jacob, and a cat, who live together on most friendly and affectionate terms, though the dog has a great animosity against other cats. The two eat out of the same plate, sleep together on the same rug, and play together out of doors, chasing each other in sport round and



round a grass plot in the garden—that is, if there be no onlookers. But should Jacob discover that he is observed, the romping is promptly stopped, and he slinks away out of sight, as if ashamed of his share in the performance. That may be so, naturally enough, as Jacob has arrived at years of discretion. He is ten and the cat four years of age. For more than four months this summer Jacob was away on his holidays. On returning home he first made a boisterous display of affection to the inmates, then made off for the kitchen in search of his friend, and licked the cat's face all over, when the two sat side by side looking at each other for a long time—perhaps a quarter of an hour. Should you consider the photograph worth reproducing, I shall be much pleased.—CALEDON.

OLD BLACK AND TAN HOUNDS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I see an article in your paper relative to the sporting dogs used in California, and speaking highly of their excellence. Reading the article has

recalled to me a fact about another State in America that may be of interest to your readers—the fact that in Virginia it is perhaps more common to see the black and tan hound with no white markings than any other kind of dog. This black and tan was, I believe, the colour of the original Old English foxhound, of which these Virginian hounds have further kept the characteristics of heavy dewlaps and dependent ears, rather reminding one of the bloodhound. They have a fine deep note, are rather slow, but very true and staunch on a scent, whether of 'coon, 'possum, or whatever the quarry may be. I may also say that the Virginians have very good dogs of the old-fashioned liver and white pointer class. They, too, are rather slow, but staunch, and work well up to the little quail-like birds that are the partridge of Virginia. In fact, all sporting things in Virginia, and even the sportsmen themselves, of whose boundless kindness, hospitality, and courtesy no one has more reason to speak highly than I, have rather the air of English sporting things of fifty, or say thirty, years ago. I believe that if it was ever thought desirable to reinforce modern English foxhound blood with some virtually unrelated cross of the real old-fashioned strain (as has, I fancy, been contemplated in some quarters), Virginia would be the place to go to look for it. There you will find the class of hound that, as we are told, would hunt a fox all day, and after putting up together with the field at a neighbouring farmhouse (the home of some of the trencher-fed pack) for a night, would take up the scent of the same fox next day, and run him to the death. Are these things only *ben trovato*? At all events it is the current tale of what used to happen on the Welsh borderland some years ago.—VENATOR.

WHITTINGTON CHIMES.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I shall be much obliged if you or any of the readers of COUNTRY LIFE could tell me what are the words which go to the "Whittington Chimes" on a grandfather's clock. I shall be much obliged if you could supply the information.—E. A. B.

[We presume "E. A. B." does not refer to the jingle beginning "Turn again, Whittington"?—ED.]

CONTINENTAL SYSTEM OF BEDDING FOR HORSES.

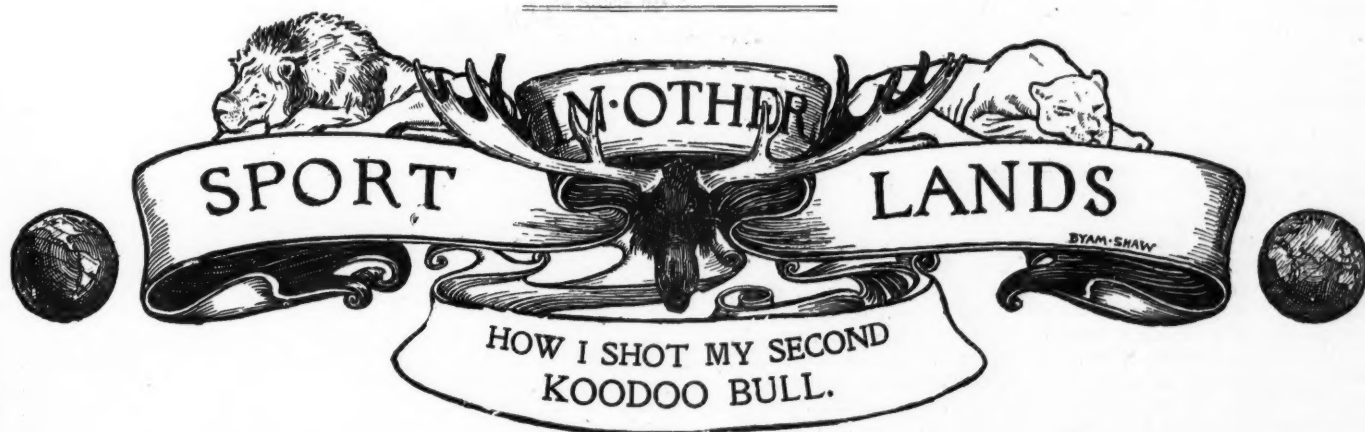
[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I should be much obliged if any of your readers could tell me their experience of treating the bedding in stables in the way that I understand is common on the Continent; that is to say, leaving everything to lie. It sounds horrid, I know; but I am assured that in the result it is perfectly clean and inoffensive, that the straw, etc., works down into a hard cake or pad, just soft enough, and not too soft, for the horses' feet. I ask about this with some expectation of getting an answer, because I understand that it is being tried, and found a success, in the cavalry stables at Aldershot. I may, of course, be misinformed, but do not think so, and I fancy it would interest many other readers of your excellent paper, as well as myself, to hear the answers from those who have tried it. Obviously, the method saves a certain amount of labour; but its chief merit I fancy to be the warmth that it gives to the stable.—EQUUS.

SIGNS OF THE WEATHER.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Can you tell me whether there is any truth in the idea that the country people in this part of the world have, that when the smoke from the fire smells bad it is a sign that rain is coming? I would venture, if I may, to suggest that it would be interesting to make a collection of the signs by which country people foretell weather. If your readers would contribute facts of this kind out of their own experience, the result would be amusing and, perhaps, instructive, and I cannot think of any medium so good for the purpose of making such a collection as your excellent paper.—HAMPSHIRE HOG.



IT was a lovely day, although a tricky wind was blowing from the north-west; however, fortunately, it was not very strong. My friend, Mr. T. of Lanka, had been good enough to say that I could have his Kaffir boy, Coppie, for the day, this individual being wonderfully clever in stalking koodoos, and having of course a thorough knowledge of the veld. Mr. K.'s farm, Botha's Post, adjoins Lanka, and he had previously given me leave to try to shoot a koodoo bull on his veld. So I determined to stalk through Mr. T.'s ground, and spend most of the afternoon in Mr. K.'s, as the animals are decidedly more plentiful in the latter gentleman's veld.

At noon I left Lanka, accompanied by my sable attendant, Coppie. I promised him a sovereign if I succeeded, with his assistance, in shooting a big bull. He was decidedly of opinion that we should not succeed, as they have been very scarce this year, owing principally to the long-continued drought. It

may be remarked here that in dry times they wander over the surrounding country much more than usual, in search of food. Coppie could not speak English well; but I with my bad Dutch and he with his bad English managed to understand each other perfectly. We stalked carefully through Mr. T.'s veld, but saw no koodoos, and only few spoors. A duiker buck jumped away behind a patch of bush, too quick for a shot. However, a little further on I saw another, which I bowled over. Soon after this we passed through a wire fence into Mr. K.'s veld; we were making for a place called Wild Dogs' Holes Kloof. I might here mention that I was wearing very light rubber-soled shoes, to enable me to walk noiselessly, and Coppie was bare-footed. I carried a strong pair of field-glasses with me.

After getting through the fence it became apparent that we were on the track of koodoos, every few yards their spoors becoming more numerous. Soon after we reached the kloof,

but, as the wind was blowing from us, we turned off to make a circuit, so that we could stalk against the wind. These animals can scent human beings at an extraordinary distance from windward.

We took a turn through some thick bush, and came into a branch of the kloof higher up. In a few minutes we were standing in an open spot, with a ravine below, then a small patch of rising ground, on the other side of which was another branch of the kloof. We had a good look about us, and held a whispered consultation as to the best way to stalk. Coppie was sure that there were lots of koodoos about; I was quite of the same opinion. Suddenly we heard something crashing through the bush, and then, about 300yds. away, a beautiful young bull ran up a small bare space, and cantered into the bush. We were rather surprised, as we did not expect to see koodoos so early in the afternoon. We caught sight of the bull a few yards further on, walking through the bush. When 500yds. off, he stood; we could not see his body, but Coppie caught sight of his ears, and, on looking through my glasses, I could see his horns and face. The horns appeared to be about 18in. long on the straight. The animal stood there for fully 10min. looking at us. We knew it would be no good to attempt to follow it, particularly as the wind was not right. Soon after this it moved quite out of sight, and we decided to make across the rising ground in front. I wish to mention here why I did not try a shot at this bull at 500yds.; the three following reasons will account for my not doing so: Firstly, a koodoo's face at 500yds., with a side wind, is a very difficult target; secondly, I was by no means sure of the distance; thirdly, had I fired and missed, I might as well have gone home, as any other koodoos around would have had timely warning of the close proximity of man, and would have taken good care not to show themselves that day.

As we crossed the high ground in front, we suddenly heard koodoos breaking in front of us, out of sight; but in a second or two they appeared, cantering across the same open spot over which the young bull had gone. First came three big cows, one by one, then a lovely big bull trotted after them, and they all disappeared in the bush. I would have tried a snap-shot, only Coppie begged me to wait.

He then said that we must not follow them, but go right round and try to cut them off. So for about half-an-hour we were stalking through thick bush, endeavouring to get to leeward. We then reached a point high up the second kloof, from which we had a very extensive view, and could observe the place where we last saw the koodoos, distant about 1,000yds. After gazing intently for some minutes, Coppie remarked, "Baas, I think I can see the bull far down standing by a bush." I brought my glasses to bear on the spot, and by them I could see it *was* the bull, but I could see no horns. I thought it was the young bull we had seen first, but Coppie decided it was the big one, as he said the neck was too thick for a young animal. So we agreed to set to work at once to stalk it. Very cautiously we made our way through the bush, and very thick it was in places. After going about 300yds. Coppie had a look at the place where we saw the bull last, and discovered that it had disappeared. However, we knew it could not have gone very far. After we had pushed on for another 100yds. or so we stopped for a further look around. My attendant at length declared in an excited way that he thought he saw the bull behind a bush; then, after another long gaze, he observed that it was lying down. So I put up my field-glasses, and he directed my gaze to the spot. The object turned out to be *not* the bull, but a very young cow! After proceeding for another 100yds. we again looked. About 100yds. from the cow was a thick solitary "specboom" bush. I noticed (as I thought) two dry sticks protruding from the top of this bush.

Coppie was staring fixedly at this. At length he said, "Baas, there stands the bull," pointing out the very bush above which I had seen the dry sticks. Even with my glasses I could see nothing but the recumbent cow. Fearing that I was looking at the wrong spot, I asked him if he meant that the animal was standing by the "specboom" with the two dry sticks above it, to which he replied, "Those are not sticks, Baas; those are the bull's horns, and he is standing behind that 'specboom.'" The fellow's keen vision was perfectly wonderful. We were then about 500yds. from the koodoos. We began carefully stalking through the thick bush, Coppie looking out every few yards to see if the animal was still there. Soon we were within 400yds. Coppie then intimated that the bull was looking our way, but was not sure whether it saw us, adding that he was frightened to go closer, as we should have to cross several bare spots, and he had seen a bushbuck ram enter a bush between the koodoos and us; if the ram ran out the noise would drive the koodoos away. He thought I ought to shoot from here. So I put my rifle over a branch, put up the 400yds. leaf-sight and aimed, but I dropped my gun again, as I could *not* see the animal, and I did not care to fire at the bush. I told Coppie we must try and get closer; so we crept on, going most cautiously and always taking care to keep a thick bush between ourselves and our prospective quarry. We got within 300yds. The bull had not moved once. Coppie now decided that it was altogether too dangerous to try to get closer. There was no help for it, so I proceeded to cock my gun for a chance shot. Just as I did so Coppie said, "Baas, he has gone." He was very disgusted, but

we agreed that the animal could not be very far off. We waited a few minutes, but only for a moment did we catch sight of it, walking slowly down to the right. Once again we had to change our tactics. Instead of keeping on in the direction we had last seen the bull, we turned off to the left, going as quickly as possible through the bush, and making a big circuit so as to get well to leeward. We left the bush, crossed over the ravine in a bare open spot, then went through scattered bush, and once again entered fairly thick bush, about 200yds.

above where we had last seen the bull. We crept along on tip-toe, hardly daring to breathe. We knew that if we did not soon get a shot it would be too late, as the afternoon was getting on, and the following day I was returning to town. It was very exciting work, but I kept my nerves as steady as possible. We had traversed 100yds. or so, when all of a sudden a short distance in front of us we heard koodoos crashing away through the bush—they must have either seen or heard us. With a muttered curse, Coppie ran forward on tip-toe to see if he could catch a glimpse of them, but they ran to the left through thick bush. I quite thought the "game was up." However, Coppie suddenly "ducked," and turning quickly round to me, fairly choking with excitement, said, "There he stands, Baas!"

"Where?" asked I, seeing no sign of it. Thinking he meant at some distance, I looked considerably ahead and said, "I can't see him."

Coppie replied, "There, Baas, behind that bush in front; I see one horn. Be quick, Baas!"

Then I, too, noticed the end of the horn, but could not see a sign of the animal's body. I cocked the gun, however, and was putting it up to my shoulder, intending to shoot through the "specboom," aiming behind the horns low down, but as Coppie noticed my intention he whispered, "Don't shoot, Baas—wait."

As he spoke the last word there was a sudden rush, and out jumped the magnificent animal. It only had a few yards to go to enter thick covert. I took a quick aim, and at last the crack of my rifle rang out. With a crash the bull fell over, and I knew that my bullet had found its billet. Coppie gave a frantic



THE KOODOO.

shout of delight, calling out, "That's got him, Baas; that's got him!"

In the meanwhile the bull had got up, and we could hear him making his way slowly through the bush. Coppie sprang into a short tree. About 100yds. away we caught a glimpse of the animal in the bush just tottering along. Seeing that it could not go far, we followed the blood spoor, which was so thick that we could run along it. In the space of a few seconds we were by the side of as beautiful a koodoo bull as one could possibly wish to see. In less than two minutes it expired; the bullet had entered low down, and well behind the left shoulder, coming out at the base of the neck on the right side. The shot was a close one—just a quick "snap" at about 30yds. distance. I was fortunate in hitting so vital a spot. The horns were not so long as some I have seen, but very prettily shaped, measuring 33in. in a straight line, and 45½in. round the curves.

We soon had the head taken off at the base of the neck, and, leaving the carcase until the following morning, proceeded to wend our way homewards, after as exciting and successful an afternoon as one could possibly wish to have.

Needless to say, I was warmly congratulated on my good fortune. The extraordinary coincidence is that I shot this bull on the anniversary of the date (July 23rd) I shot my first koodoo bull last year; the locality and time of day were also identical. Coppie was with me on both occasions, and I had the same kind of shot at both animals, and used the same gun.

Before ending I should like to pay a tribute to my sable attendant, Coppie. Without his knowledge of the veld and the habits of koodoos, also his wonderfully keen eyesight, his patience and perseverance and extreme care, I am fully convinced that I should have returned to town without the head of my second koodoo bull.

BERTRAM E. JUPP.

TWO FOR JOY.

THE two young magpies who sat, with easy confidence, for their portraits come of a race that has a history so ancient as to be lost in myth. Into magpies were the children of Pierus converted as a punishment for their presumption in contending against the Muses, and the augurs of Rome doubtless watched their movements with care. From the beginning of time the magpie has been a bird of omen, good or bad. Shakespeare, spelling the name of our mischievous favourite in a manner which points to a derivation whilst it deprives us of a pretty idea, wrote in "Macbeth":

"Augurs and understood relations have
(By magot-pies and choughs and
rooks) brought forth

The secret'st man of blood."

The ominous character is even still ascribed to the magpie. It is embodied in an old English rhyme from which the title is stolen, and the Scots preserve the ancient superstition thus in a jingle, of which the last line may even refer to the nine daughters of Pierus:

"One's sorrow, two's mirth,
Three's a wedding, four's a birth,
Five's a christening, six a dearth,
Seven's Heaven, eight is hell,
And nine's the devil his ain sel."



C. Reid, Wishaw, N.B.

TWO'S MIRTH.

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And still in the country one may find girls, cultivated but willing to cherish the pretty fancies of old time, who take half seriously and half in earnest the omens of the flight of birds. For superstition, when it is pretty, dies hard; and the belief in luck, good or evil, is likely to endure as long as joy and sorrow continue, to be distributed unaccountably, and apparently at random.

If we depended on magpies only in England, we should be safe enough from the terrors mentioned in the last line and a-half of the jingle. Dead magpies do not count, and you shall rarely see so many as six of them together, save in the dreadful museum of the game-keeper. In France it is otherwise. As I travelled down the valley of the Loire a year or two ago, in the early spring, it seemed to me that the magpies were the only birds that survived. They were a pretty sight with their loping flight, and I like them. None of them shall be killed on that estate, now in Spain, which is to be bought when my ship comes in. Not that their mischievous propensities are to be denied. It is as needless to teach them to suck eggs as to give the like instruction to a grandmother. Most likely the prevalence of magpies in France is largely accountable for the scarcity of small fowls. But Margaret Pie is prettier than Johnnie Daw, who is every whit as mischievous—I have detected him in sucking a whole nest of pheasant eggs, and in lifting



C. Reid, Wishaw, N.B.

THREE'S A WEDDING

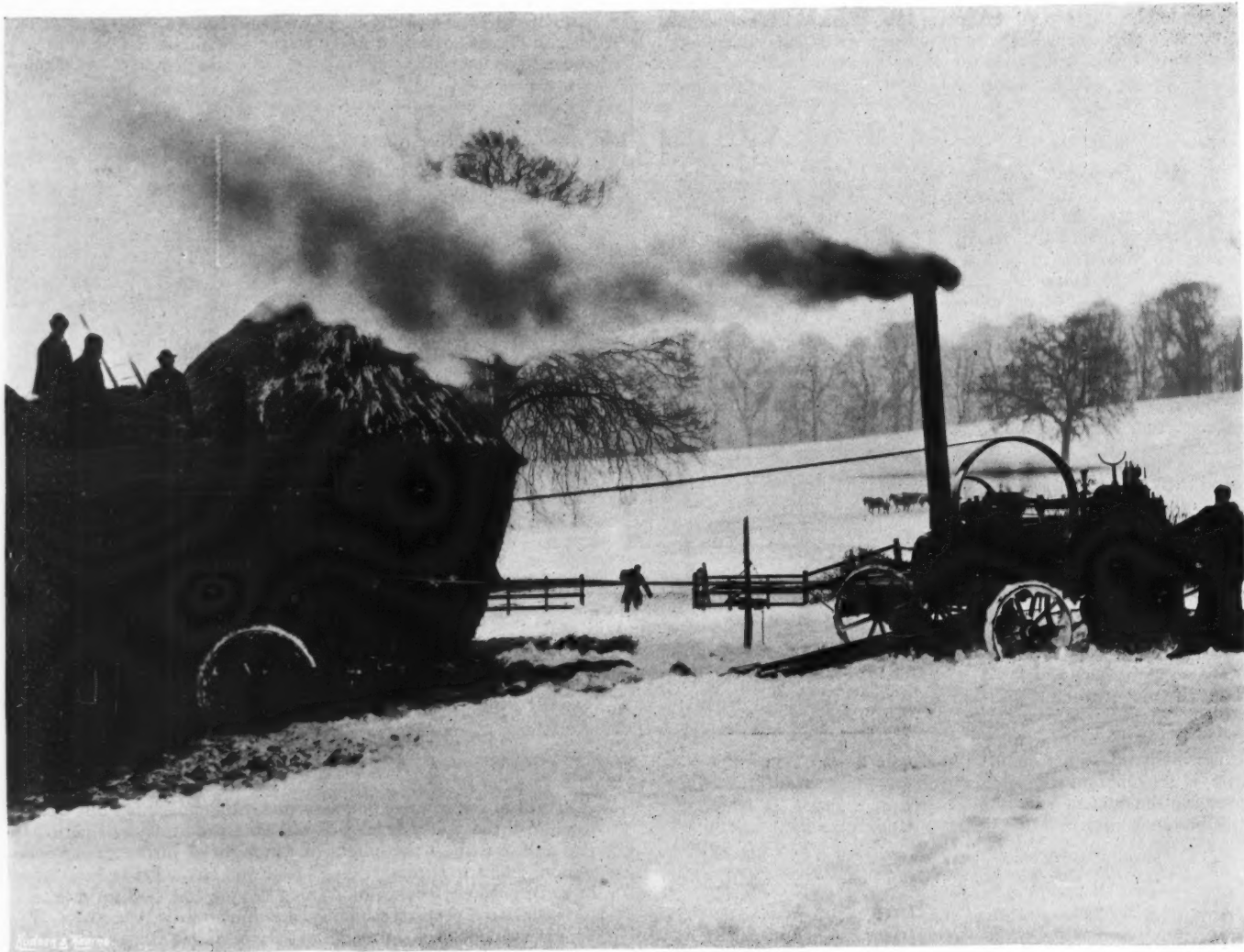
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live chickens from the poultry-yard—and my keepers shall exterminate the jackdaws before they touch a magpie. As the jackdaws will certainly not be exterminated, for they are as cunning as they are numerous, there will be safety for Margaret and her family.

Magpies—the Romans called the pie *garrula*, talkative—are easily tamed, and make capital pets, though they are pleasantly mischievous to the end. Merrily wicked, that is the expression for the pie: there is a kind of impish devilry in the very look of him or her. And the magpie-keeper feels this wickedness from the beginning. There, in the bare tree, is the nest; nothing seems easier than to secure the young. But the boy, once bit

and twice shy, hesitates, and exercises the caution of an old man. Why is the nest conspicuous? Because, more often than not, it is inaccessible by reason of the rottenness of the branch on which it rests. That which will bear a hollow mass of twigs and clay will crack beneath the weight of a lusty boy, as I have found often. Many a tumble was caused in this fashion thirty or forty years ago, and the parent birds forgot their bereavement, I am certain, in their triumph. And when one reached the nest, entry was no easy matter. It was domed, and the passage was guarded by a zareba of thorns worthy of the Khalifa himself. But the joy in the young magpies later repaid a multitude of scratches.

AUSPEX.



J. T. Newman.

THRESHING CORN IN SNOW.

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MR. PROSSITER'S MONGREL.

WHEN I took Maxwell over with me to call upon the Prossiters I warned him not to expect any amusement, or anything congenial in the acquaintanceship. In fact we merely agreed that it was better than doing nothing. It was a cold bleak afternoon in March, and as the Prossiters live a good two miles from the barracks, the expedition meant a walk anyhow. All the same, for my part I like the Prossiters, and I like Miss Prossiter to pour out tea for me in their beautiful drawing-room. Besides, I had been away on long leave since the beginning of January, and had not seen anything of them for nearly three months. Of course I know old Prossiter started in life with only sixpence, or it may have been threepence; anyhow it was one of those trifling sums which seem to be better to start with than three hundred a year, because it means you become a millionaire. Prossiter is an exceptionally nice millionaire—not a bit loud or vulgar, but as quiet and nice as possible, with a capital taste in claret and pictures. He is a Justice of the Peace and all that kind of thing, and has quite a fair number of ideas.

Still, it was not exactly the kind of house to suit Maxwell. Both Mr. and Mrs. Prossiter are rather precise, old-fashioned people, who dine at half-past seven punctually, and who dislike tobacco and dogs. Miss Prossiter is distinctly pretty, and does not, I hope, dislike tobacco. I say no more.

Now Maxwell is a capital soldier, but beyond soldiering he has only one idea—rough-haired terriers—and I could not promise

him that he would meet anybody with whom he could talk about rough-haired terriers. Still, as I have said, he agreed to risk it, as he was bound to take the dogs out. So off we started, accompanied by more dogs than I could count; in fact, a regular pack, which attracted some attention as we went along the road.

"When we come to the house," said Maxwell, indicating the terriers, "they will wait outside all right."

"I hope so," I replied, fervently. "I really believe that if Mrs. Prossiter saw a dog in her house she would have a fit. She thinks all dogs are mad, and old Prossiter rather inclines to the same view."

"She couldn't help liking mine," said Maxwell, with the pride and confidence of a possessor. "Now there's a picture for you," he continued, passing rapidly to his favourite topic, and pointing out one of the dogs with his stick. "That puppy ought to win a first prize next winter at Birmingham."

He based this prophecy upon certain statistics about the animal in question, and gave me precise measurements of his head and back. Indeed, he dwelt upon the merits of this particular dog at such length that before he had time to give me the pedigree and credentials of any of the others we found ourselves at Mr. Prossiter's gate. Outside this elegant structure in wrought iron the dogs remained at Maxwell's orders, and we soon found ourselves inside the drawing-room. Mrs. Prossiter was away from home, but Miss Prossiter seemed glad to see us, and greeted me pleasantly, while Maxwell, whose thoughts were

with the terriers in the road, moodily nibbled the head of his stick on the sofa. Presently tea was brought in, and shortly afterwards Mr. Prossiter entered, beaming with hospitality.

"You know Captain Starleigh, papa," said Miss Prossiter, as I rose and bowed. "I had her word for it, so I suppose her father *did* know me, but he is the kind of man to whom I am introduced afresh in this informal way at least once a week. Following upon my own introduction, I ventured to present Maxwell, and left the latter to bring in the subject of rough-haired terriers as best he might into the midst of Mr. Prossiter's local and municipal gossip, as I had a good deal to say to Miss Prossiter after my prolonged absence.

I was getting on capitally, and sinking into a confidential whisper, when to my astonishment I heard the master of the house speaking in a loud and hearty voice, which was clearly intended for the whole room to hear.

"Dogs, sir? You were speaking about dogs!" he cried to Maxwell. "Now I am not what you would call a doggy man, but I can tell you a queer story about a dog."

"Papa is going to tell us about his dog," whispered Miss Prossiter. "You must listen; it has all happened since you were here last, and you have never heard it."

The old gentleman, standing upon the hearth-rug, smiled expansively at us through his eye-glasses, and dug his hands into his trouser pockets, which were of the kind that only elderly and rich men possess, namely, descending perpendicularly from just below the waistcoat: Pockets of this kind seem to give a prosperous air to their owners, and connect themselves, in my mind, with heavy gold seals.

Maxwell, I could see, was smiling in a supercilious way, as if he had heard everything about dogs that was to be heard; and as I was anxious that the homely circle to which I had introduced him should favourably impress him, I was not best pleased at old Prossiter wishing to display his ignorance about dogs.

"Seven-and-thirty years," our host began, "had I been married and had a house of my own, and never a dog had come inside it. I never liked dogs, and Mrs. Prossiter positively dislikes, or used to dislike, them. Well, sir, would you believe it? I now actually possess a dog, or rather a dog has attached itself to me. It forced itself into the house, and by sheer impudence carried the day—by sheer impudence," repeated Mr. Prossiter, laughing cheerfully and with a relish sometimes displayed by successful men in describing how others have imposed upon them.

"It was like this," he continued. "I was walking home from the office one night last January—I always walk, wet or fine, for the sake of the exercise—when, as I was passing through a deserted street, I heard a noise on the pavement in front, and there were two dogs fighting in the mud. I gave the bigger of the two a kick without stopping to think, and the result was more effective than I anticipated, for it instantly ran away, leaving the little dog dying, as I thought. It lay just under a lamp-post, so I could see it distinctly, but as I could do no more I walked on. The night was a dreadful one, bitterly cold, with sleet and snow and wind, and I was pretty glad to reach home, I can assure you. But when I got into the hall, and Wilkins, the butler, was helping me off with my coat, to my surprise I saw that the little dog had come in behind me. It had clearly followed me home."

"And then, papa," put in Miss Prossiter, sternly, "you were going to turn him out into the snow."

"Nay, my dear, nay!" replied her father, hastily. "I was meditating what your dear mother would say."

"The fact is, Captain Starleigh," Miss Prossiter said, "it was I who pleaded the little dog's cause. He looked so wretched, all bleeding and wet and dirty, and he wagged his tail so pathetically, that I couldn't resist him. I washed him myself, for papa was all against him at first."

"Well, what I said," Mr. Prossiter explained, "was this. 'Mary, my dear,' I said, 'if you must have a dog, let me buy you a really good one, and do not let us keep the first mongrel

picked up in a chance way like this.' Though I am glad we kept him, for he is a faithful little fellow."

"Since that eventful evening," cried the young lady, "this animal has ruled the house. Papa and mamma are perfectly silly about him. He has the best of everything to eat, he sits on all the drawing-room sofas and chairs, and their only excuse is that they think him a protection against burglars."

"I like his impudence," Mr. Prossiter said, "to come here, after having been kicked about and half-starved in some gutter, and live on the fat of the land, and do it by simple assurance. It is very wise of him; I don't deny that I am fond of him, though I never had a dog before."

Maxwell had listened with some interest to this anecdote, and asked if they had ever seen any advertisement about him, or heard of people losing a dog.

"No," said old Prossiter, carelessly. "It never occurred to us to look, though perhaps we ought to have done so. The dog is a cur, no doubt, ill-cared for, and likely to be missed by nobody. I hope we have done nothing dishonest, but the animal seems of no value."

"The fact is," said his daughter, "we don't know what kind of dog he is, so advertisements in the paper were of no help. But," she added, "I have taught him to beg."

Maxwell grunted. His dogs do not do any tricks, for he considers tricks only worthy common animals, and undignified in a well-bred dog. I rose to say good-bye.

"Won't you see Waif?" asked Miss Prossiter; "he is such a queer little dog; you could perhaps tell us what sort he is."

She rang the bell as she spoke. To tell the truth, I was not very eager for the Prossiters' dog to be produced, for I feared Maxwell, conscious of his pack of prize-winners at the gate, might say something contemptuous about this unknown mongrel.

"We call him Waif," explained Miss Prossiter, "because he was homeless and lost. Here he is."

The dog whose history we had heard trotted soberly into the room, and after sniffing our boots, sat up on his hind legs by the tea-table. He was a rough-haired terrier, and did not look like a mongrel. I glanced nervously at Maxwell to see what he thought of him, and observed that he was frowning in perplexity. Then I saw him smile.

"There," said Mr. Prossiter, pointing at Waif. "There's the only dog that has ever crossed my threshold, and I daresay he is not worth five shillings, but upon my word I don't believe I would take five pounds for him; we are all so fond of him."

Maxwell drew Waif towards him and examined him critically. Then he released him and smiled again.

"Oh, you are laughing at him," said Miss Prossiter, "because you think he is a worthless dog. Poor little Waif," she cried, patting him. "Never mind. We are all very fond of you."

"I beg your pardon," said Maxwell; "I own to laughing, but it was not because I don't admire Waif. He is a Dandie Dinmont, Miss Prossiter, and a very good one too."

As we went back along the avenue Maxwell was very silent, and not even the sight of his terriers, peering through the bars of the gate, seemed to rouse him. He met their boisterous greeting with unusual coldness, and strode along the road without a word.

"Rather nice people," I said.

"And a nice dog," said Maxwell.

"That's sarcastic, I suppose."

There was no answer. "What on earth is up?" I asked.

"You really want to know?"

"Of course I do," I said.

"Then remember you asked me to tell you," said Maxwell;

"it is that mongrel of Prossiter's that weighs on my mind."

"He is a mongrel, then? You said he was a good one."

"He is about the best dog in the world, if you call that being a good one," Maxwell answered. "That's Champion



C. Reid, Wishaw, N.B. WAIF BEGGING.

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Ramses the Fourth, the best Dandie Dinmont going. He was lost at the show up here in January, and the syndicate that owned him have been wild to find him ever since. They think he has been stolen, but he must have got away in the town somehow as they were taking him from the show. I believe the man with him got screwed or something. Anyhow, old Prossiter has got him now."

"What an extraordinary thing," I gasped.

"Isn't it?" assented Maxwell; and then waving his stick among the terriers round him, he continued vehemently, "Why, I might offer all this lot, and chuck in fifty pounds as well, and I couldn't give the old man what his mongrel is worth. And he said he wouldn't take a fiver for him. It's the first dog he has ever had, he says, and I think you'll own it aint a bad one to start with."

ALFRED COCHRANE.

A Lady's Trophy.

NOT long since we recorded of a lady, whose portrait formed our frontispiece, that she had done great things during the stalking season in the Highlands. In the current number we have much pleasure in producing a picture of a splendid nine-pointer shot by Mrs. J. E. Platt, of Bruntwood, Cheadle, Cheshire. The stag was shot in Inverlocky Forest, and the head is particularly fine. Indeed, we almost venture to say that the span, which is 38in., is a record for Scotland. The measurement from tip to tip is 32½in.; the length of horn is 31in.; and the brow points, of which one is slightly curled, are each 10in. long. A magnificent trophy of which Mrs. Platt and the Inverness-shire forest may well be proud.



A NINE-POINTER.

A Day of Incident in the Jungle.

I HAVE at home, in the hall, the skin of a panther and of a barking deer—jungle sheep they call them, too—lying side by side, as in the millennium; and over the dining-room door, looking down on them, are the skull and horns of an old bull bison. All three are associated. I bagged them all on the same day, and it was a day more full of incident than any I have known since. I was new to the country, too, and everything makes such an impression then.

We were out after bison—they are splendid quarry; the finest of all, I am inclined to think. We had come upon the track of an old bull, and were following him up through the dense, wonderful stillness of the jungle. Not a sound of a living creature was to be heard, not a breath stirred the bamboos. It hardly seemed natural. It oppressed one with a sense of the death of the informing spirit of Nature. In the old Scotch phrase, it was uncanny, yet rather like beneficent fairyland than bogieland, in the flood and warmth of the glorious sunshine. Hither and thither before me, like a black snake, glided my native tracker, noiselessly, tending to, rather than detracting from, the weirdness of it.

My, what a tracker he was! He had been engaged, I was told, for the Prince of Wales; but the Prince had been obliged to put off his visit to that region—one of the finest in India for the sportsman. This tracker never seemed to falter or to be at a loss. Now and again, in a quadrumanous fashion, he would pick up from the ground a leaf with his toes and, passing it to his hand, examine it. Sometimes, when he guessed that I had a suspicion of his infallibility, and thought he might be leading me in the "track of the wild goose," he would pass a leaf back to me behind his back, and I would see it had been crushed, or licked, and had the mark of the saliva upon it still. It was marvellous; but after a time I ceased to doubt him. He led me over hard ground, where I could see no sign of a trail, almost at a run. At one time we crossed the track of a whole herd of bison, going at right angles to us, but still he kept on the bull we were following, and picked out his trail triumphantly on the far side of the confused trampling of the herd.

Of a sudden the tracker before me fell as if shot, motioning me with his hand behind his back to do likewise. He muttered some words I could not understand, and pointed with trembling eagerness, as of a dog standing stiff at the "point," into the mass of the jungle. At length I made out a dusky shapelessness. "Yes, that must be him; that must be the bison. And yet I wonder if it is! I cannot speak a word of this black fellow's lingo; and if I turn back to ask Dunlop—my English friend—I shall lose the shot." As I hesitated, uncertain, a great horned head appeared in advance of the dusky mass. The bison, now fully revealed, lifted his nose in the air and sniffed loudly. My poor old fellow, you are artful, your senses are keen, but you are too late. I bring up the great 12-bore rifle, take steady aim, fire—both barrels—and then start up with a wild yell of excitement, very unlike the command of himself that is shown by the "Old Shikarry" of the books.

"I've hit him—I know I hit him!" I shouted, but the next moment we heard a crashing of the great body through the bamboos, and Mr. Bison was away; but with two balls from my rifle in his body—I would have sworn to that.

Dunlop came up, and we held a council of war. Dunlop said he was a family man, that it was risky work following up a wounded bison, that he did not think he would go, and that he would not advise me to. "Oh," I said, "I'm a family man too, but I'm bound to have that bison." My family, bless them! I am devoted to them, but I thought more of that bison, for the moment, than of any of them.

So off we set again—the tracker, then I, and then another native fellow who could speak a little English of a sort. To my great joy I saw large clots of blood where the bison broke away, but I understood from the interpreter that the tracker did not like the look of this. It meant that the bison was bleeding from the nose rather than internally. One lives and learns at this game. I had thought at first, from the quick and sudden ceasing of the crashing among the bamboos after the first breaking away of the bison, that he had come to a standstill, but it was explained to me that it always sounds like that; and though not above half-satisfied at the time, I found out afterwards that it was true enough. Even after the first rush of a herd of elephants the dread stillness is restored again miraculously soon.

On we went, following the trail, aided now by the occasional gout of blood from the poor brute. All of a sudden, as we came to a clearer place in the jungle, about 20yds. before us, sprung, from the thickest of the bamboos, a reddish creature like a fox, but higher on the legs. My tracker stopped on the instant, so did the creature in front of us; he crouched down, put back his ears, and drew back his lips snarling at us with his white rows of teeth—it was the act of an instant. Simultaneously, almost, another like him leapt from the thicket, drew himself back and snarled at us like him, and then a third; and there they were all three in just the same attitude glaring at us. Then, like well-drilled dogs at a keeper's gesture, they slunk back, still threatening us with their gleaming eyes and jaws, into the jungle, and all was silence and stillness again.

We resumed our tracking of the wounded bison, but had scarce again got in motion when a most indescribable sound of mingled snarling, yelping, and caterwauling broke from the jungle close beside us. After a moment it died away, almost as suddenly as it had begun, and on we went again, I beginning to feel rather "jumpy." After about another 50yds. the tracker stopped again. We were then just beneath a great tall cocoa-nut palm. The tracker threw back his head and looked up. I followed the direction of his eyes, and then, what was my amazement—terror, almost I may say—to see there, above me, 40ft. or more from the ground, one of those small reddish animals they call barking deer, or jungle sheep. I did not know what sort of place I was getting to. A barking deer 40ft. up a tree which had never a branch on it till you came to the one across which the deer was lying. For of course the deer was dead. I am not asking you to believe

that it had climbed or flown up there of itself. But how had it got there? Who could have put it there? With what motive? As if in answer to my thoughts, the tracker slowly traced along with his finger some great rents in the bark of the trunk of the tree, near the base, which I had not before noticed. The interpreter ejaculated the one word "panther," and the tracker nodded his head in assent.

Now, of course I did not understand it all at the time, but the full explanation, as I learnt after, was this, as the tracker deduced from the appearance of the foxy-looking creatures, from the snarling we immediately afterwards heard, from the deer up the tree, and the claw marks on the trunk. The three red animals which we had seen, and which had retreated back at sight of us, were wild dogs—not pariahs, or ownerless village dogs, but the real wild dog of the jungle. These had been hunting the barking deer, which must have doubled back at sound or sight of us. The dogs must have overrun the scent, and so have come across the path of the wounded bison which we were pursuing. Then, on turning back into the jungle, away from our line of tracking, the dogs found that their quarry had been meantime killed by a panther. Their expostulation it was which we had heard expressed in the snarling and yelping, accompanied by the swearing of the panther. The panther then, either to get quit of the natives caught hold of the trunk and straddled his legs round it. The other then tied this one's ankles together with a piece of creeper, and then passed a band of the same creeper round the tree trunk and under the climber's armpits, and, with this assistance, the fellow shinned up the tree, hand over hand, at a wonderful pace. When he brought down the deer, we found it had no mark of harm upon it, save the wound on the neck where the panther had struck it and broken the spine, and it was still quite warm. I had the deer skinned, and some of his carcase put back up the tree again that the panther might not be disappointed, and then on we went again, very little delayed by the episode, after the wounded bison. Now this

was a very wonderful chain of incidents. There is, of course, no feature in it that is in the least unnatural, but it is a combination of episodes such as a man might go through a lifetime, I should imagine, in the Indian jungles, and never experience. The most marvellous aspect of all struck me as being the evidence of the strength and agility of the panther, which had run up the bare trunk of the tree 47ft.—I had it measured afterwards—with the deer in its mouth, with no branches or any means of clinging save by the digging of its claws into the bark, of which we could plainly see the marks at the base of the trunk.

After all, though, it was little more remarkable than the feat of our domestic pussy-cat when she runs up a little hedge-elm with a rat in her mouth. Barking deer is to panther much as rat is to cat; but the unfamiliarity of the panther's feat makes it strike one as so wonderful. Meantime, our principal quarry, the wounded bison, must have been getting a start of us; but after a while of going along in unbroken silence through the jungle, in the same fashion as before, my tracker again came to a rigid halt. He pointed across the bed of a nullah, and there, on the further side, was the bison. I saw him very plainly this time, standing clear of the dense growth, motionless, and slightly turned away from us. "I have got you now, my friend," I said to myself; and taking steady aim behind his shoulder, fired. I say steady aim, but I suppose I was excited and my hand shook, for instead of seeing the great beast roll down into the bed of the nullah, as I had felt sure he would, he made a rush up the steep bank and, with a crash into the jungle on the far side, was gone. I was almost beside myself with rage, and nearly as angry with the tracker as with myself, he took it so coolly. I don't know what he may have been thinking to himself in his outlandish lingo, under his black skin, but he paid very little attention to me. He stuck to business, and at once crossing the nullah, began following up again the track of the now thrice-wounded bison. I noticed he seemed to be proceeding with greater caution than before. Whether some inspiration—upon my word, I sometimes felt inclined to think he was inspired—foretold him what was going to happen, I do not know; but when we had been going along something between a quarter and half a mile, I should think, suddenly there was a tremendous crash in the jungle close beside us; the tracker threw himself violently backward, and I, instinctively almost, did likewise, just as an enormous body came charging through the undergrowth, and thundered past us so close that we felt the wind and flurry of the charge. The bison, for it was of course he, even touched the tracker's leg with the end of his near horn, but only just grazed, without ripping, the skin. It was a near thing. The brute had caught

sight of us first, and that, as I learned afterwards, is the danger in following a wounded bison through thick stuff. If he sees you first he will almost always charge, and nothing but an immediately fatal bullet will stop him. Poor beast! he had nearly avenged himself, but it was his last effort. Before I had got my dazed wits about me again, the tracker was pulling at my sleeve and pointing to where the bison was, some 40yds. or so behind us, whither the force of his rush had carried him. He had come down upon his knees, and was so resting, with his head almost upon the ground, bleeding from the nostrils. The tracker signified to me that I could safely go up and give him the *coup de grace*, and it was soon all over with him.

There he was, at length—my first bison, and a fine specimen too, a splendid head; that is it over the dining-room door.

Well, we called up the fellows and set them to work to skin the bison and bring the head and such portions as they liked of him into camp; and then, led by my tracker, went back to the cocoa-nut palm where the carcass of the deer still lay, 47ft. from the ground, on the first branch of the tree. For the day's sport was not over yet; at least we hoped not.

They built a platform for me on a neighbouring tree, within easy range of the tree that the panther had made his larder of, and I mounted with my tracker to wait for the panther's return. It grew dusk, and the night comes down so quickly that I was fearing I should not get a sight of the panther, when the tracker gave a low ejaculation and pointed downwards. Following the direction of his finger, I saw two great gleaming eyes slowly creeping over the ground, and for a moment or two I could not delineate the body they belonged to. Then, all of a sudden, my eyes came to the right focus and I saw the thing, like a great cat, stealing towards the tree where the deer was. It was not a good shot, so I waited, for I felt surer of myself with the little "Express" than with the great 12-bore. I waited till the panther came just beneath the cocoa-nut palm, and crouching his shoulders yet closer upon the ground, turned his head upwards and looked up. Then I fired, and he fell without a sound.

We waited some ten minutes to be sure that life was extinct, and then we came down and found him quite dead.

That lucky shot reinstated me in my own and the tracker's estimation. On the whole, it was a very wonderful day's sport, and it is in remembrance of it that I have the panther's and the barking deer's hides lying side by side in the hall, and the old bull bison's head glowering down upon them.

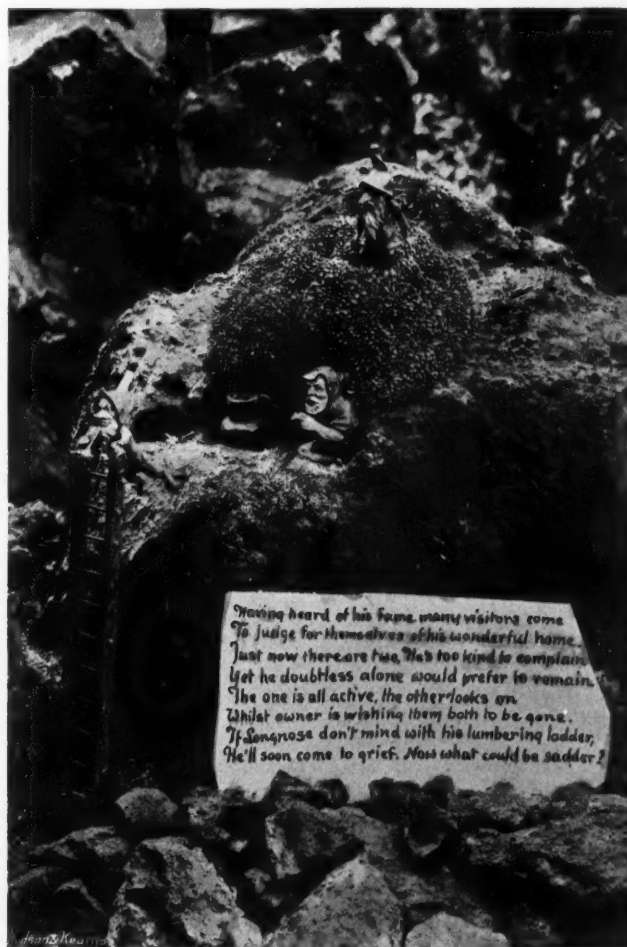
HORATIO.

AN AMUSING HOBBY.

SIR CHARLES ISHAM, of Lamport Hall, near Northampton, is, as many gardeners are well aware, particularly fond of rock gardening, and he is very successful in the pursuit of his fancy. But he is not content to be a rock gardener merely. The rock garden, with its caves in miniature, suggests irresistibly the fables and fairy tales connected with gnomes and the like creatures. Our pictures show how Sir

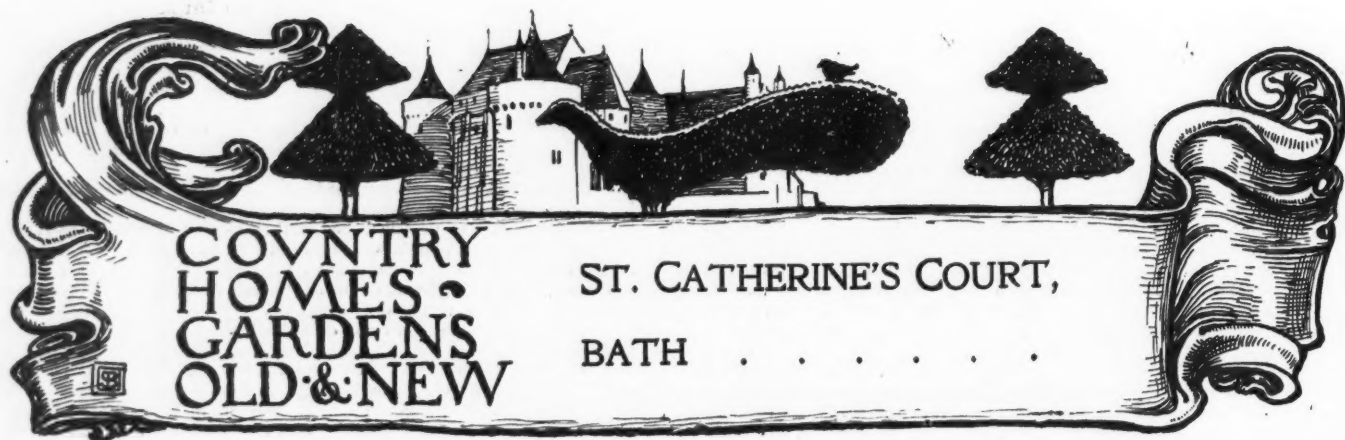


THE ROCK GARDEN INHABITED.



FAIRY VISITORS.

Charles Isham has followed this fanciful suggestion, peopling his miniature rockwork, overgrown in luxuriant saxifrage, with amusing figures of gnomes; and underneath he has inscribed harmless verse. Surely a very pretty and innocent caprice. But unless the nectar is quite harmless, the solitary gnome is hardly of a size to cope with his brown jug; and the other two should be welcome.

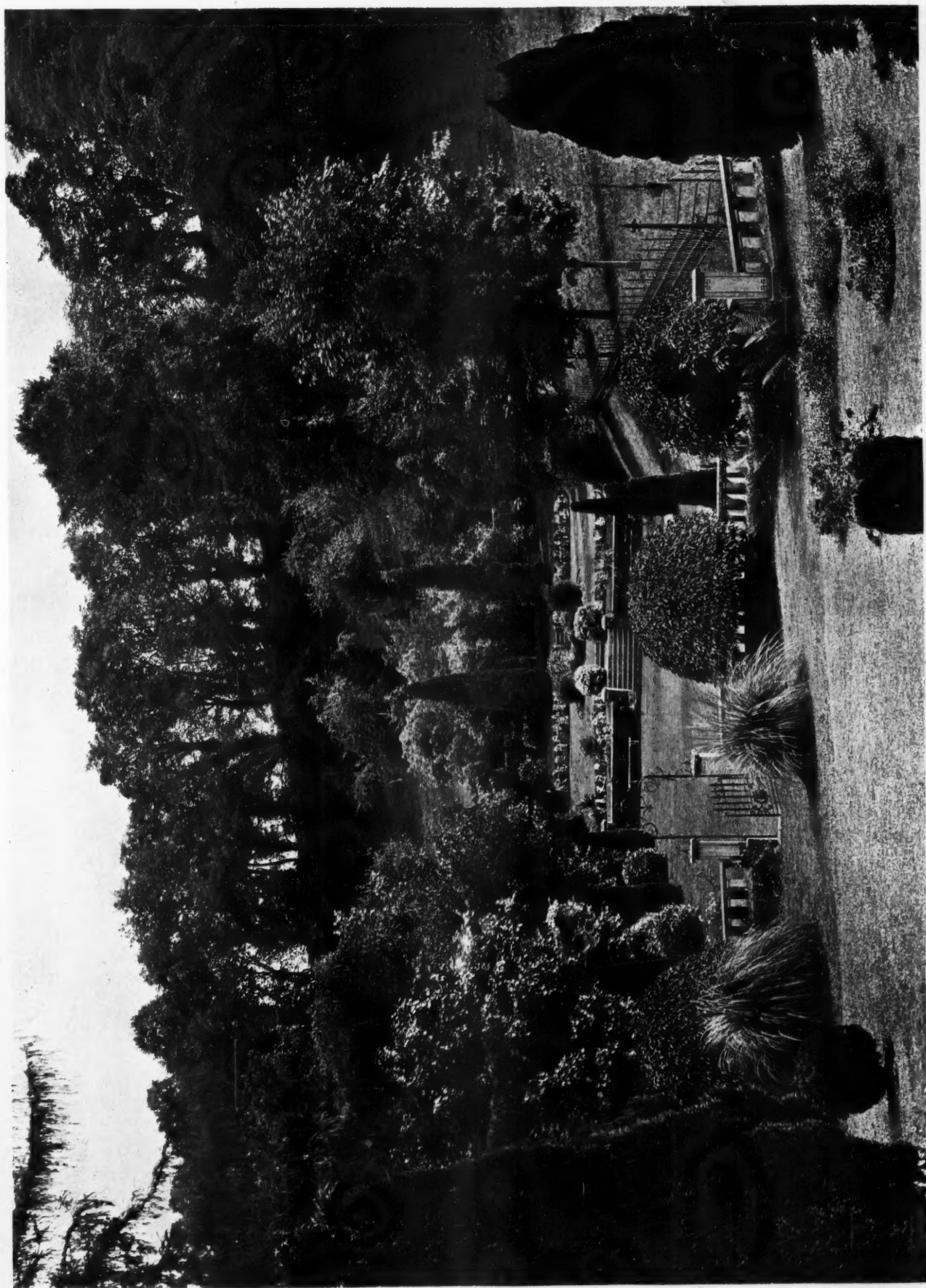


FROM among the many beautiful houses that adorn and the radiant gardens that gladden the county of Somerset we have chosen another to-day. St. Catherine's Court, long the residence of the late Hon. Mrs. Charlotte Olivia Drummond—who died recently at a very venerable age, for she was born in 1798—is near Bath, and many visitors to the West know the house and the church well. They are near neighbours, as in the case of not a few great mansions we have illustrated and described. The church, which is a very ancient structure, rebuilt by Abbot Cantlow, of Bath, about the year 1499, immediately faces the house, which once was a grange or cell of Bath Abbey. Of the sacred edifice nothing shall be said here, save that the monument of Captain William Blanchard and his lady, which we illustrate, with the four kneeling children as "weepers" below, is quite characteristic of its date (1631), and that the quaint structure falls admirably into the landscape on that beautiful declivity of the Down. The configuration of the

ground gives character both to the house and the garden. Some parts of the former go back to pre-Reformation times, and the observer will note the older character on the side looking down the declivity. Singularly picturesque is the whole structure, built upon those varied levels, with its high gables, its beautiful windows, and its many features bespeaking the style of Tudor and Jacobean times. The singularly beautiful porch, with the chamber above, dates from the days of Charles I. There is dainty picturesqueness in the classic pillars and arch, the unusual niches at the angles, and the open sides with the quaint balustrades.

But we are anticipating a little. Though the descent of St. Catherine's Court through the hands of successive owners is not to be described here—for the romantic garden awaits our survey—it will not be inappropriate to show how from an abbatial possession the place became a private residence. After the Dissolution, Henry made a special disposition of the forfeited





"COUNTRY LIFE."

GARDENS OLD AND NEW.—ST. CATHERINE'S COURT: FROM THE HOUSE.

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lands of Kelston, Batheaston, and St. Catherine, and of the "capital mesuage" called "Katherine's Court," granting them to one John Malte and his putative natural daughter, Etheldred. Now Malte was the King's tailor, and Etheldred the King's daughter, by Joanna Dyngley, or Dobson, but, thereby winning the Royal favour still further, the tailor brought her up as his own. Her hand made the fortune of John Harington, who married her in 1546, and settled at Kelston. He was the father, by his second wife, of Sir John Harington, the witty knight whose epigrams and sallies were the amusement of the Court of Elizabeth. Sir John was the Queen's godson. He was knighted in Ireland by Essex, to her great anger, for she resented this exercise of power, and, when Harington presented himself at Court, she sent him away with a buffet, swearing loudly, "By God's Son, I am no queen; this man is above me." It was Harington who shocked the Royal modesty by translating a licentious part of "Orlando Furioso," and was punished for so doing by being made to translate the rest. However, the gay knight, "that saucy poet, my godson," was Elizabeth's favourite, and she visited him in Somersetshire in 1591. So much, however, must suffice concerning the personal interests of St. Catherine's Court House.



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THE PORCH AND TERRACE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

It was the possession of Harington's mother, though not his residence apparently, and afterwards passed through many hands, with varying fortunes; but our illustrations show in what a state of perfection the interesting old house stands now.

The character of the gardens is derived from the steepness of the ground. Successive terraces, with grass slopes and balustrades, approached by fine flights of steps, which have a remarkably picturesque effect, are the leading features. They are united with quaintness of design, and an unusual mixture of styles. The strictly formal is combined with the freely natural, and

the plants are arranged without any very fixed or precise order, such as we meet in the pure Italian style. It will be agreed that the effect is particularly successful, and that the surroundings are an appropriate setting for the lovely house, which, be it observed, is itself clad here and there with creepers, but nowhere to the obscuring of its architectural character. The situation is delightful, with bold hills enhancing the effect of the garden work, and tall trees making a beautiful tracery against the sky.

In the garden, foliage and flowers are everywhere. Here stand trees and shrubs taking their natural shape; neighbouring



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THE APPROACH.

"COUNTRY LIFE"



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FROM THE SOUTH-EAST CORNER.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

them very remarkable clipped yews; close by masses of perennials glowing each in season from early spring until the frosts of winter begin. But, again, with excellent taste, the trees do not obtrude upon the house, which stands, impressing us with the sense of repose, supported and enhanced in its engaging beauty by all the things that surround it. Let it be noticed how effectively the *Agapanthus umbellatus*, or African lily, is used in large pots near the mansion on each side of the porch. This is just the place for the bold application of tub-gardening, and the simple effects we point out illustrate how satisfactory is the result. There is much scope in this kind of gardening, and the agapanthus, funkia, heliotrope, orange, and many other shrubby plants, which merely call for protection from frost, may, by planting them in tubs, be made to import a charming air of new colour and freshness into our summer gardens.

The special character of the gardens at St. Catherine's Court, which has been alluded to, is well seen as the visitor stands by the porch of the house and looks up that long series of flights of steps by which the sylvan crest of the hill is reached. The old stone-work, the terraces, balustrades and urns, the grass slopes, the wealth of foliage, and the flowers imparting colour, and

the ferns, their delicate green in many a sheltered nook, all contribute to make a garden-picture which would be hard to excel. Then again, still lower on the slope, by the steps overshadowed by that beautiful tree, what a delightful prospect does the old gabled house, with its oriel, make as we look up at the grey gables rising from the sylvan frame-work, and see the ancient walls against that green and beautiful background. Or we may stand at the west corner, upon the terrace, looking over towards the distant trees, with a garden foreground in which quaint yew-forms rise up from amid boldly planted shrubs and masses of flowers. Rarely will such huge clipped yews be seen

as those giant sentinels of irregular conical form which flank the approach to that upper garden. It is by bold planting, let us say again, that the effects in these noble Somersetshire pleasure grounds are gained, whether it be in the forms and grouping of trees, or in the simple massing of flowers. Yet, simple as the arrangement is, all the available space is well utilised, and it is delightful to pass from level to level upon the hill, discovering successive charms as we go forward.

Then the formal garden is quaintness itself. Few better examples on a small scale can be found. Though formal, it is not severe. It lies amid sloping



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FROM THE WEST CORNER

"COUNTRY LIFE."



Copyright CAPTAIN BLANCHARD'S MONUMENT. "C.L."

grass-land and green steep; walls, gates and charming grilles of iron, and trees and shrubs, such as spiral yews, firs, and larches, with flowers in abundance, invest this part of the garden of St. Catherine's Court with an individual charm at every season of the year.



WORK OF GENIUS.

FOR some little time after the publication of "An Open Question" (Heinemann) all the world that reads was agog with curiosity to know what personality, masculine or feminine, lay behind the pseudonym C. E. Raimond. Men and women soon began to recognise from the strength of various parts of the book, not by any means from any weakness shown in it, that it had grown in a woman's brain. And then the authorship of "An Open Question" became an open secret, and it was noised abroad that C. E. Raimond was none other than Miss Elizabeth Robins, the powerful exponent and supporter of Ibsen's dramatic works in England. Then some applied themselves to reading the book with renewed vigour, and others opened the volume with something of prejudice. But the mood in which the reader began soon became a matter of indifference. The witchery of the book seized upon him or her, the power to criticise was merged in sheer admiration and drowned by the over-mastering interest of the book from beginning to end. So finished and appreciative a study of human life and character—it happens to be American, but it is the humanity of the thing that tells—a book at once so bright in detail, and so deeply instinct with the melancholy of the great tragedians, and concerned with a theme so absolutely modern, is a priceless gift to the world. It is a wonderful work of art, dealing delicately but without false modesty with one of the most cruel problems that can be placed before weak men and women for solution.

Yet I would fain guard myself against the risk of misleading others as I myself have been misled by the reading of many reviews. "An Open Question" involves a problem, in some measure depends upon a problem, but it is not like a problem play intended for the stage, or to be a work of literature, or both—a mere one idea story. To rush away to the end at the very outset, if Ethan and Valeria had never known the taint which they believed to be in their blood, if they had never sailed out into the Golden Sunset and the unknown sea of death, in a word, if there had been no problem at all, "An Open Question" would still have been a work of power and genius. In other words, Ibsenism does not bulk large in the book, it is not its essence and core, and what there is of it is not of the grosser kind. The young person may be permitted to read the book with safety as soon as she has reached the age at which it is held discreet to inform her that children are born, not found under gooseberry bushes or brought in the doctor's handbag.

It is a family story. It is concerned with the fortunes of the Ganos, and with a phase of American history marked by a quiet sadness which touches me

more than the violent tragedies of the Civil War itself. The Ganos were a Southern family, of modest means and position, and, as the phrase goes, much respected. "The oddest thing, perhaps, about their naive veneration for the house of Gano was that so many of their neighbours shared it. Generation after generation it imposed upon the community they lived in." The action begins immediately after the battle of Bull's Run, but before the reader can understand the story he must appreciate the condition of the family tree at that time, sorely lopped as it was. Mrs. Gano, a woman stern of manner and strong of character, deeply religious, yet content to let her children think out their own religious difficulties, imperious, reticent, proud to a fault, yet possessing in her heart a deep well of tenderness and profound love, was the head of the family. She was a widow. Of her sons, Ethan, intended for the ministry, had married against his mother's commands a pretty Bostonian, who died in giving birth to Ethan Gano the younger. The father, in his bewilderment after his wife's death, allowed the child to be taken charge of by his father-in-law, Aaron Tallmadge, a New Englander to his finger tips, and then met his death at Bull's Run. Valeria and John were the remaining children of Mrs. Gano.

"She had been a striking, although fragile-looking, woman, tall, arrow-straight, and auburn-haired, just entering on middle life, when she went to her own room, and closed the door behind her, that day the despatch came after Bull's Run. A few weeks later, when she came forth again, it seemed to her awe-struck household that it was an old woman who appeared among them with stern, blanched face, bowed shoulders, and abundant hair whitening at the temples. But what her altered looks called forth of sympathy, her reticent manner either held at bay or ruthlessly rebuffed. . . . The look of cold surprise that anyone should venture to come near her grief sealed up the fountain of neighbourly sympathy.

"At the close of the war the Ganos were ruined." There is a world of simple pathos in the phrase. Their slaves, made free against their will and deprived of their livelihood at the same time, were ruined with their sometime owners. Mrs. Gano, with her two delicate children—the taint of consumption was in the blood of both—and with two ex-slaves, equally faithful and delightful, retired to an old Indian fortress in the Middle States which her father had bought years before. There John Gano became a bank clerk, showed a certain disposition towards sociability, and devoted himself to natural science. His mother ruled her children with a rod of iron, and her proud contempt for the New Englanders around her showed itself in amusing fashion. John, for example, became enamoured of Miss Hattie Fox, a typical product of New Plymouth. His wily mother, instead of openly opposing the match, asked the girl to supper and disillusioned the young man by letting him see the contrast between the refined manner and speech of a Southern lady and the gaucheries of a nervous Yankee pretending to be extravagantly at her ease. "No word ever passed between mother and son about the young lady. It was wholly unnecessary to discuss her. John had been made to see, in a ruthless light, the unseemliness of asking this raw little Westerner to be his mother's successor in the house of Gano, even in these degenerate days." So in due course John Gano was plighted to a cousin, union to whom would of course end in making the thin Gano blood thinner than ever; and John went to New York, and lived a laborious life, and married his cousin, and had many children, of whom Valeria the younger was the more important. His wife's death left him a broken man, incapable of further work, compelled to linger out his life with little Valeria and his other daughter, Emmie, in the old fort and in dependence on the mother, who met increasing poverty with unbending pride.

In the meantime, Valeria the elder had come to the end of a sad life. She had been full of artistic leanings, "from the days of her inarticulate childhood, with no more than a handful of her native soil and a watering-pot, or a lump of precious putty from the plantation carpenter. She had tasted the tyrannous joy of the creator, fashioning beasts and men." "In vain she prayed to be allowed to go away and study. . . . Her mother, amazed at the proposal, left Valeria no moment in doubt of her determination to crush it." And the reason was so cleverly characteristic. The stern mother had a hidden tenderness for her fragile, willowy daughter. "You must remember," she said in reproach of the frivolous Aunt Paget, who thought sculpture unfeminine and irreligious, "the Ganos are more artistic than we Calverts. Valeria has great talents." But the idea that the girl should go to New York alone, or live there without a chaperon, was insupportable to her Southern mind. And when the presence of John and his wife in New York removed that part of the difficulty, and Valeria was permitted to go, it was almost too late. Valeria had beaten her wings in vain against the walls of the old Indian fortress too long. The life was almost out of her. Still the studies under the Italian Conti began; but an indiscreet allusion in a letter from Valeria to her mother brought the grim old lady to New York.

"She found Valeria a different being—but she found also Signor Conti and a lonely studio in a side street, where her daughter worked alone with this foreigner, modelling 'the members of the human body,' while the sculptor worked on his 'Lady at the Bath.' It was all unspeakably objectionable, and un-American. This was no fit milieu for a Gano. It wasn't a seemly place for any lady. Valeria must come home. She told her so the same night. No, Valeria could not do that.

"Why? Are you so attached, then, to this Italian image-maker?"

"Valeria went home to the West the next day. In the following winter she died."

Yet the stern mother was not intentionally cruel. A sense of duty, of the dignity due to a Gano, moved her always. Beneath her most ruthless actions there was always a passionate and hidden tenderness, and to the end of her repressed life she lived and mourned among the tokens that reminded her of her children and their thwarted tastes.

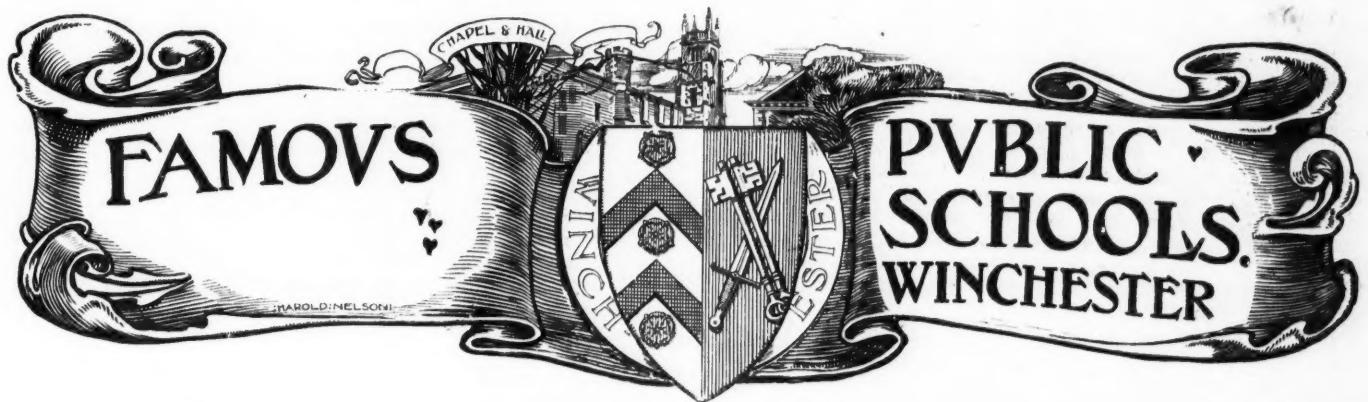
Let us return to Valeria the younger, a personality of extraordinary interest, and to her sister Emmie; not that Emmie matters much. Emmie had been handed over to the tender mercies of her grandmother early, and the character had been stamped out of her. But Valeria had been left to grow up wild in the ramshackle house at New York. The scene of her first presentation to her grandmother is delightful. She did not "budge upon the usually subduing apparition of Mrs. Gano. Dirty and neglected, an impudent little face with bold, grey eyes looking out from a wild swirl of tawny hair, there she stood in the middle of the untidy dining-room, aided and abetted in some unspeakable enormity by the mere presence of her faithful ally, a huge St. Bernard dog." Mrs. Gano's appeal to John was fruitless. Yet there was strength and feeling in the wild child. The description of the manner in which she crept alone into the chamber where her baby sister lay dead, and of her childish reflections there, is destined to be remembered as one of the most touching and affecting passages in English literature.

Such was the child who, after her mother's death, went with her broken father to live under the rule of her grandmother at the Indian fort. Her sufferings under that unbending discipline were certainly acute, all the more acute, probably, because of her maintenance of the family tradition that "Val never cried." The painfully good Emmie, with a finely-developed habit of tale-bearing, was a thorn in the flesh to her; she also had to go through her religious experiences after the manner of all Ganos; the poverty of the household was a misery to her; her old-fashioned and thread-bare clothes, relics of her Aunt Valeria, and unspeakably precious in her grandmother's eyes, were a constant torture to her. In her turn she had an ambition which was sternly thwarted. There was music in her soul, and she had a great voice. But that was not the kind of taste that the grandmother was likely to encourage; and what Mrs. Gano did not enjoin that, like the law, she forbade; and that which she forbade was not done. One comfort only Valeria found, and that was in converse with her father, who, moody, in failing health, and himself a failure, was yet not without intellectual interest. Yet, in spite of all things, Valeria grew up a girl of strong character, of infinite courage, and of lightsome spirit. The extraordinary point and merit of this book is that, although it is one long tragedy, the characters are bright and their lives are pleasant to read.

Into this cousinly society came Ethan the younger. Once and once only—the episode is told in the most charming fashion—had he been permitted to visit the Gano establishment in his boyhood. In truth Grandpa Tallmadge hated and feared Grandma Gano as much as she despised him. Ethan was a young man when he came the second time to visit the grandmother whose whole heart was centred upon him. And he was no longer American in feeling. He had passed through many experiences, including those of a very rich young man with literary tastes in Paris. Then, thinking himself strong enough to stand alone, he had defied his grandfather and had attempted to fight the world for his livelihood. But the verses and the essays of the penniless who want money have to take their chance in a harder market than the work of the rich, who are satisfied with

easy words of admiration and give dinners for the price of them. Ethan Gano had recognised that he was a failure, was on the brink of utter starvation, when a letter from America informed him that Grandpa Tallmadge was dead and he was a millionaire. So he also drifted back to the old fort.

It needs hardly to be said that the flame of love was soon kindled in the hearts of Valeria and Ethan; and one is almost compelled to wish that their author and creator could have permitted them to live happily in the good old style. But that was not to be. John Gano was still alive. Religion he had lost long ago, and science had mastered his beliefs. As his cough grew worse and worse the grim theories of heredity became the abiding subject of his thoughts. It fell out upon a day that John Gano was discussing these matters with his nephew, heedless of the presence of Valeria, who, in fact, had fallen asleep, and then woke to an interest in the gloomy conversation. "He who passes a disease down the line will be looked upon as a traitor, the only criminal deserving capital punishment." "Consumption." "My father and wife died of it. My mother has the old lingering form of it. It was galloping consumption that carried my sister Valeria out of the world at thirty. My children—" "I tell you you belong to a worn-out race." "We are effete, and we deserve to die out root and branch." Such were the words of John Gano, and the iron of them entered into the souls of those who listened. But love will find a way; and the old saying was sure to assert its truth when the love that would not be pent-up lived in the heart of so brave a woman as Valeria Gano. Ethan and she resolved, to cut a long and exquisite story short, to marry, and to live in perfect happiness for one whole year, and then to cut the silver cord simultaneously, and to go out into the unknown hereafter together. It was wrong, of course, but the closing chapters are full of the very poetry of life, and the courage and brightness of Valeria—Ethan was a poor creature by comparison—are admirable up to the last moment. They sailed out into the sunset; they are lost; one would not be sorry to see them again still happy, and defying a doctrine of heredity, for which, in this case, there happens to be very little foundation.



IN the opening words of this article an apology is due to all Wykehamists, that is to say, to every man—there is no such thing as a boy in College, Commoners, or Houses at Winchester—who has known what it was to be reared at the great school which William of Wykeham founded. The apology

is due because in this series of articles allusion was made to Eton first, and Winchester comes later; whereas in truth Winchester celebrated its Quincentenary in 1893, and by stretching a point might have fixed the celebration at an earlier date. Also, whatsoever Mr. Wasey Sterry, as a patriotic Etonian, may do in the way of minimising the influence which the college at Winchester exercised over Henry VI. and Waynflete when they founded Eton, and whether Henry transplanted many scholars or few from Winchester to Eton, there is not a particle of doubt that some scholars and a master were translated from the banks of the Itchen to those of the Thames, and that they taught Eton what it ought to be. For that matter it is easy for the Wykehamist of to-day to go to Eton, as indeed he often goes, for sheer love of

the place, and to translate Eton architecturally into Winchester, finding Chamber Court in School Yard, and Chapel and Hall pretty much where they ought to be. Winchester, in a word, may not be the oldest of the public schools, but it is certainly the oldest which has survived as a public school through the

ages to the present day, and has remained in high place all the time. William of Wykeham may, as an iconoclast has suggested, have taken his embryo idea of a public school from Merton. In our judgment it is far more likely that, knowing all things about the primitive educational establishments of his time, he reflected upon them and improved upon them. It is, however, certain that Wykeham's model, and for that matter Wykeham's motto also, have been an abiding influence and example in the formation of the English public school system. For proof, early and late, be it observed



R. W. Thomas.

DR. HOMFRAY'S CARTOONS.

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that Eton was founded on strictly Wykehamical lines—some Wykehamist terms have endured there longer than at Winchester—and that Dr. Arnold of Rugby, a saint among schoolmasters, of whom, as the founder of a new public school spirit, one some-

times grows weary, acquired his experience as a boy and as a young schoolmaster at Winchester.

What, then, are the special charms of Winchester? From the topographical, the sanitary, and the scenic point of view, they are few. The college is, it is believed, built on piles—they must be of imperishable alder wood—its situation is, as the Americans would say, by no means salubrious. The silver Itchen flows past and almost through the damp plain on which College, and Meads, and New Field stand; but it makes no show. St. Catherine's Hill, with its tuft of trees, and the Downs, lend some variety to the landscape; but unless a boy has been brought up on a plain, or among the fens, which are worse, a long education is needed before he appreciates the fact that the rolling Downs have a beauty of their own. On the other hand, the architecture of the older part of Winchester College is venerable and beautiful to the last degree. If the stranger be in Chamber Court he will note that some boys, in fact they are all juniors, uncover themselves within its grey precincts. That is not instinctive homage to beauty in architecture. It is a relic of Roman Catholic tradition, for above the middle gate is a statue of the Virgin to whom the mark of respect was paid originally. Tradition haunts every corner. Above the gate is Election Chamber, where candidates for scholarships passed through the final ordeal. To the right are Fifth Chamber, where Mr. Lucas of the Colonial Office once held sway. Beyond it is Sixth, the Kingdom of the Prefect of Hall, chosen for character no less than for ability to rule the school.

On the first storey on the right is the abode of the departing second master, beloved of all Wykehamists, the Rev. George Richardson, and in his dining-room are the portraits of early Commoners of Winchester College. Beyond, in the open, are Chamber Court conduits, once the only place for ablutions, and past them is the entrance to kitchen, ornamented by the painted effigy of the Trusty Servant. Inside is kitchen itself, lofty of roof as that of Christ Church, addicted to the cooking of mutton and to the boiling of ground ashes, or ash plants, for use as tonics to the character which might not assimilate rapidly the motto, "Manners makyth man." Up a flight of steps is Hall, with its attendant buttery. Then, facing the gate, comes Chapel, with its noble Crimean memorial at the entrance, wherein each Wykehamist is reminded that he is "child of the same family, bought by the same Lord." Inside, save for structural form and for the noble Jesse window, Chapel is not remarkable. It was re-seated and renovated a short time ago, with the useful



G. W. Wilson and Co.

GENERAL VIEW FROM MEADS.

Aberdeen.

results that it lost its collegiate form and its old oak, and that the accommodation was reduced. Beyond it, to the left—you are still supposed to be gazing from under Middle Gate—is the corner tower alongside of which are the windows named Mint Muniment and Bogeyhole. Next comes First, where Mr. C. A. Cripps, Q.C., M.P., once flourished, and somebody, a year or two later, put somebody else's "windows underneath his bed"; and then Second, where Dr. Homfray drew animal portraits with the end of a burnt stick; and then Third and Fourth, where all sorts of things have happened.

This is only a corner. Tradition haunts the whole place, and adheres to the very language of the place, inasmuch that two Wykehamists could twenty years ago, and doubtless could still, address one another without pedantry in terms which would not be understood by others. It would be perfectly natural for one of those boys at Middle Gate to say to another, "Socius down Meads. We will go by Seventh Chamber Passage, through School Court, to Amen Corner. Have a look at Non Licet Gate, splice Hollises, pass Log Pond and Meads Champions, look at Temples, and sit down and talk of pitch ups and t'other schools under broly tree." And their talk might be of "bangies" or "pot-babies," or of "toasted rolls," or of the multitudinous "bishops" or "deans," and no human being other than a Wykehamist would be the wiser for hearing them. It may be said that these things are minor in importance, but really they are far-reaching in their influence. They go to the making of that feeling of brotherhood and patriotism which is essentially Wykehamical. "Manners makyth man" is the motto always before them, which enters into their souls for their lasting benefit. Quiet they are, and reserved beyond the common measure of

schoolboys; their tone is rarely loud, effusive demonstration is rare amongst them. In after life they learn sometimes that they seemed to be reserved and cold when they meant to be warm and hail fellow well met. But the mass of them are to be trusted to perform quietly at least as much as they promise; and to come to the front in a solid way without pushing themselves.

The result is part of the discipline, although the discipline is not what it was, which is a remarkably good thing. During the period of what was known as the "Tunding Row," there were, as is usual when folks talk of what they do not understand, wild exaggerations. There was no great harm done. But the ash plant was in excessive use notwithstanding, and some boys, who have since made a great name in the world, although they were poor kitchen-maids and body-servants then, suffered much. Moreover, the records of the Inquisition held by prefects, by order of the head-master, were amusingly misleading. You were punished for knocking off another boy's hat on his way to cathedral; it went down as "irreverence." Making bad coffee



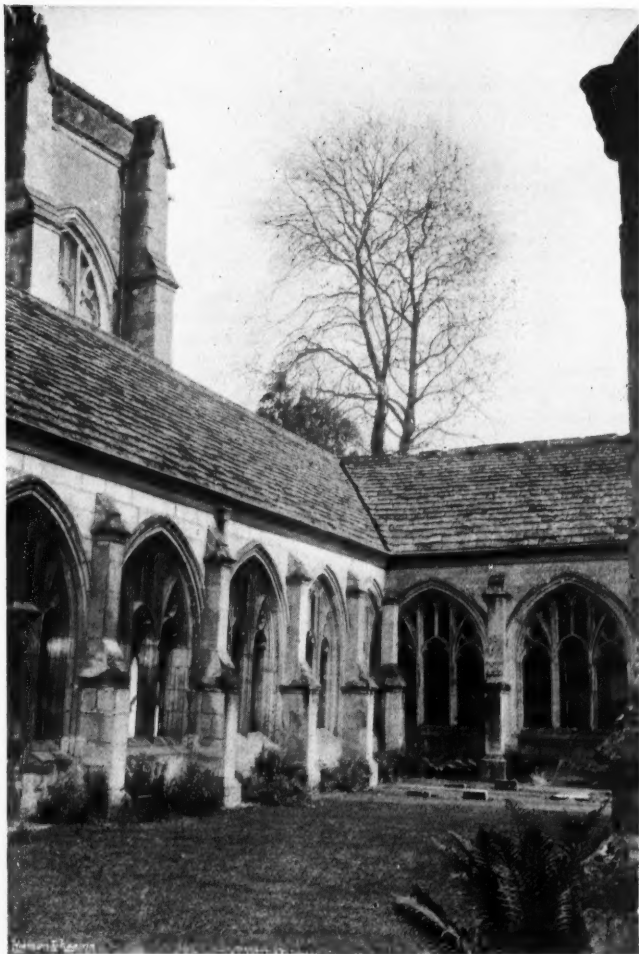
R. W. Thomas.

MIDDLE GATE.

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was "insubordination," and so forth. But all that is gone. The best of Wykeham's principle remained; and his main principle was to trust the leading boys with the internal government of the school, and to entrust them with the necessary authority. Recourse was at one time made too frequently to the ultimate sanction of schoolboy authority, the ground ash; but, after all, it was a survival. It belonged to the days of leather breeches; and for the rare cases in which it may be applied now, gauze were not too slight a covering.

Now for the constitution of Winchester. The nucleus, the centre of tradition and its preservers, are the seventy boys in College who, for a long time now, have been chosen by open competition. Once they were Founder's kin, and it is said that the question whether a boy were of the Founder's kin or not was settled by trying whether his head would break a trencher. That legend is probably untrue. More to the point is it that these seventy boys are educated, boarded, lodged, and partly clothed at an inclusive charge of £20 per annum, and that the £20 is but a modern addition. Outside College are Commoners, and the inhabitants of Houses, who are about equal in number, and make up the whole school to 400 or thereabouts. The distinction between Commoners and Houses is, and for



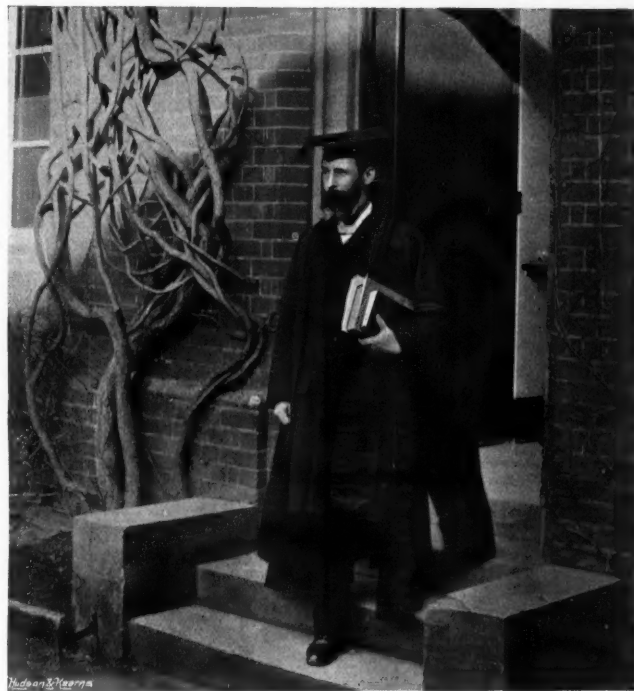
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THE CLOISTERS.

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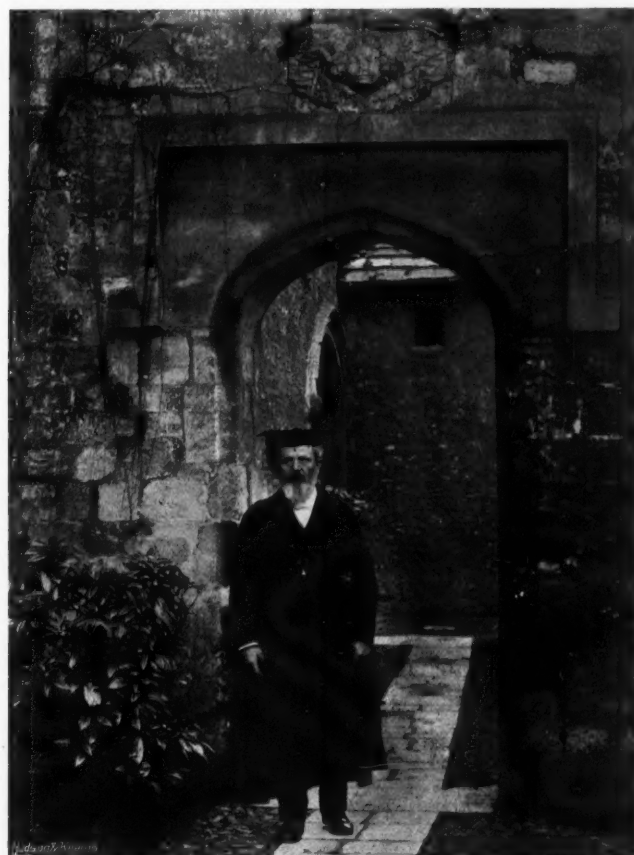
many years has been, purely artificial. Both live in tutors' houses under identical conditions. But "Commoners," as a building, used to be the head-master's boarding-house (he has none now), and Commoners' houses are now the four tutors' houses which took the place of Old Commoners. In this connection one point alone remains to be mentioned. A parent may be prepared to pay any sum to secure the admission of his son to Winchester, but a place in the school cannot be gotten for gold. The boy's name must be put down a long time in advance, and at a stated time, and even then the parent is liable to be disappointed. Limited numbers are to the advantage of a school, but they are a frequent source of annoyance to the fathers and mothers of boys.

For the education, it is as good as it can be. Particular attention is devoted to English, a language of some little importance in this country, through the foundation of a special prize by Mr. Hawkins, one of the masters. At least two of the most distinguished editors in London have won this prize. Modern languages, at one time, were taught without much success by foreigners. They knew their own tongues, but they did not know the English boy, and he knew them off by heart. The plan of English masters has been adopted at Winchester, as elsewhere, successfully. In mathematics the teaching is not to be surpassed. Long ago, when such a thing as an Army class



Thomas. DR. FEARON LEAVING HIS STUDY. Copyright

was not so much as dreamed of, boys frequently passed into the Army directly from the school, and sometimes, as was possible in those days, into the Indian Civil Service. Two such boys are within the writer's memory. One presented himself reluctantly, for he had no taste for soldiering, as a candidate for Woolwich. He was first on the list of successful candidates; but he never went to the Royal Military Academy. Another, after weeks of illness, came in first for the Indian Civil. For open scholarships, in the old days, the school did not pretend to compete. Its six close scholarships at New College were the blue ribbons of schoolboy ambition. Other scholarships, which were open, were a *pis aller*. The boy who entered for them opened himself to a suspicion, which usually had some justice in it, of unwillingness to go through the preparation for the New College examination. Once there were two such boys who no doubt would have "got off to New" if they had desired. They went elsewhere. The examiners gave three scholarships only, and



THE SECOND MASTER, REV. G. RICHARDSON.

the head-master, at Domum dinner, declared in old-fashioned style that they had "taken the children's bread and given it to the dogs." But the rejected children did very well. Every one of them secured an open scholarship out of hand, and a fourth secured his place in the Indian Civil Service. In these days, it is believed, some account is made of open scholarships, but in those times to enter for and get one in large measure was an excuse for idleness and lotus-eating in Cloister Time, which is the summer. This writer could go on with his theme for ever. He could talk of lavender meads and of hills, of the idiosyncrasies of Mrs. Ferris, of the relations of the warden and the head-master—and a thousand things besides. But he must not. The last question is how much, supposing a boy has not the luck and the ability to secure an entrance into College, a father must be prepared to pay to have a Wykehamist for a son. The answer is that the total accounts sent in to parents by a house-master vary from £135 to £150 per annum; to which, of course, an addition of two or three pounds for subscriptions, and at discretion for pocket-money, must be added.



HARDY GRASSES.

THE hardy perennial and annual grasses contribute much beauty to the garden if they are well placed, but crowded up with other plants their gracefulness is lost. Few perennial grasses are worth consideration, but these are of distinct and noble aspect. By grouping such kinds as the Pampas Grass, or the New Zealand Reed, bold effects are obtained, and the less imposing forms may be associated with the taller hardy flowers or even shrubs.

THE PAMPAS GRASS.

The botanical name of this beautiful grass is *Gyncrium argenteum*. It was introduced from Monte Video about fifty years ago, but happily the plant is fairly hardy. Shelter is necessary to protect the tall white plumes, and to ensure luxuriant growth plant in a stiff loam, well drained, and in a position where the character of this noble grass is revealed. We think few places are more appropriate than the margin of a broad sweep of turf, as the turf sets off the graceful foliage and waving plumes. It varies considerably in height, this depending upon the nature of the soil and position, sometimes the plant attaining a stature of 12ft. Variation will be noticed in the colour of the plumes, sometimes quite a pinkish tinge being apparent. Before any other tall grass we should select this, but as

THE NEW ZEALAND REED,

Arundo conspicua, produces its beautiful plumes in July, fully two months before those of the Pampas Grass are in perfection, it should be grouped freely too, everything of course depending upon the size of the garden. These grasses are suitable only for the larger English gardens, where the great tufts of grassy



F. Mason Good.

THE PAMPAS GRASS.

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foliage and white feathery plumes are effective. Of the two the New Zealand Reed excels in grace, the plumes, when the plant is in a deep moist soil, reaching a length of no less than 14ft., and they remain many weeks in full beauty. It is not, we think, quite so hardy as the Pampas Grass, at least that is our experience, and is most imposing when in a quiet nook with evergreen shrubs surrounding but not overshadowing it. We like also to see the tall grasses in groups by water-side, but remember that when planting them in this position the soil must be well drained. Wet about the roots in winter is fatal. The

GREAT REED

is *A. Donax*, one of the most graceful of all grasses, reaching, in good soil, 10ft. in height. This is more tender than either of the preceding grasses, and comes to us from Southern Europe. It is not unlike in general aspect the Bamboo, the tall strong stems being clothed with foliage, which in the variety *Macrophylla* is of a pretty glaucous shade, and in the kind named *Variegata* charmingly striped with white. The last-mentioned form is very tender, and we should not trust it entirely in the open, except in quite the South of England. Where, however, climate is against its growth in the open garden, it may be used for the summer only, or grown in pots for the decoration of the conservatory. As a rule, a cone of coal-ashes over the crown in winter is sufficient protection.

EULALIA JAPONICA

is another grass of extreme beauty, and very hardy, so much so that it will even stand weather of sufficient severity to kill the Pampas Grass outright. It is very graceful in growth, the bold tufts rising to 8ft. in height, and about as much through when fully developed. We admire this grass for its gracefulness only, but in hot summers it will bear freely its feathery sheafs of rich brown flowers. As in the case of the Great Reed, there are varieties, in both cases finely variegated, one being named *Variegata*, in which longitudinal stripes of white appear on the leaves, and the other *Zebrina*; the latter is one of the most distinct of all variegated plants, and appropriately christened, transverse bands of soft yellow appearing across the leaves. Another form is called *Gracillima*, the leaves very slender and, as the name suggests, graceful, even more so than in the other varieties.

OTHER BEAUTIFUL GRASSES.

A beautiful native grass is the Reed of the Marshes (*Arundo Phragmites*), which revels in the moisture of ditch or stream side. This is scarcely, however, a grass for the garden, unless the lakeside is sufficiently extensive to accommodate a somewhat unruly plant. *Panicum virgatum* is a deep green tufted grass, with rich brown flower panicles in summer, and it is quite hardy. With the approach of autumn the stems turn to golden yellow, a rich contrast to deep green leaves. *Saccharum ægypticum* is like a very graceful Reed with slender leaves clothed with greyish hairs, and the midrib is white; it grows fully 6ft. high. The Feather Grass (*Stipa pennata*) is smaller than any grass heretofore mentioned, and should be planted in the mixed border amongst other hardy flowers. If one wishes to clothe a loose, hungry bank with beautiful foliage, plant the Sea Lyme Grass (*Elymus arenarius*), which is a native grass, but worth introducing into the garden, choosing such spots as loose banks which it is desired to hold together. The leaves are of a blue-green colour, so charming and distinct that once the plant is seen it will not be readily forgotten. It is of extreme vigour, and must not be admitted where its roots are likely to rob weaker plants. The grasses we have mentioned are all worth growing in our gardens, and add interest and beauty to the pleasure ground.

CHINA OR MONTHLY ROSES IN WINTER.

The writer was charmed a few days ago with the Monthly Rose and its varieties Fellenberg and Mme. Laurette Messimy, in a sunny border against an old wall near the sea. Flowers in profusion were open in the December sun, and the colours seemed richer and the fragrance sweeter than anything one could have in summer. This welcome sight of fair Roses in December has strengthened our belief in the monthly and tea-scented races. None are freer or sweeter in every way than these hardy and almost perpetual Roses, scarcely without blossom from early summer until the end of the year. Of course, gardens near the sea are warmer than inland, but many of our readers doubtless live close to the seashore, and have warm, high walls against which Roses will flourish. In such positions they will yield flowers for many months. No posy is daintier or sweeter than one of the fresh-coloured Monthly Rose in December.

HOLLIES FROM SHEFFIELD.

We have received from Messrs. Fisher, Son, and Sibray, of The Royal Nurseries, Handsworth, Sheffield, sprigs of several kinds of Holly, amongst them two beautiful varieties raised by this firm. These are *Wilsoni* and *Mundy*. The former of the two is a splendid kind, with large, leathery, deep green leaves and brightly-coloured berries, and handsome, too, is the other variety. We welcome these additions to a noble group of evergreen shrubs. Sprigs were also sent of *Marnocki*, very fine leaves and red berries, and the yellow-berried Holly. Of all evergreen shrubs none is more precious than the Holly, and those who intend planting it should not be without the kinds mentioned in this note.

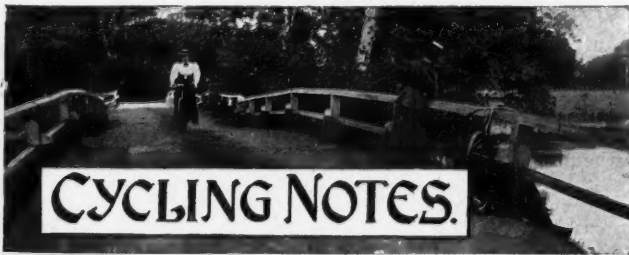
The catalogue for 1899 of Messrs. Sutton and Sons, of Reading, is a sumptuous production, artistic in every way, and well illustrated. Flowers and vegetables are described, and hits given upon culture.

"Fug Football."

"FUG football" is the latest addition to Oxford games. It may have come to stay, or it may not. It has been going on for two years—very vigorously all last winter, and rather less so this autumn—but that is largely due to the mild weather and absence of rain in the early part of term, which made outdoor amusements preferable to the closeness of a game in the courts. To people who like to trace the evolution of a game, as Mr. Herbert Spencer did that of dancing, the history of fug football does not offer much ground for ingenious speculation. Its story is known, and is rather creditable to all parties concerned. The Holywell racket courts at Oxford stand on ground purchased (we believe) by the Duke of Norfolk, and destined to become part of the site of a Roman Catholic college. But the courts were not to be pulled down immediately, and they stood empty and useless. Those who play rackets at Oxford are rather select as to the courts they use, and the Holywell courts

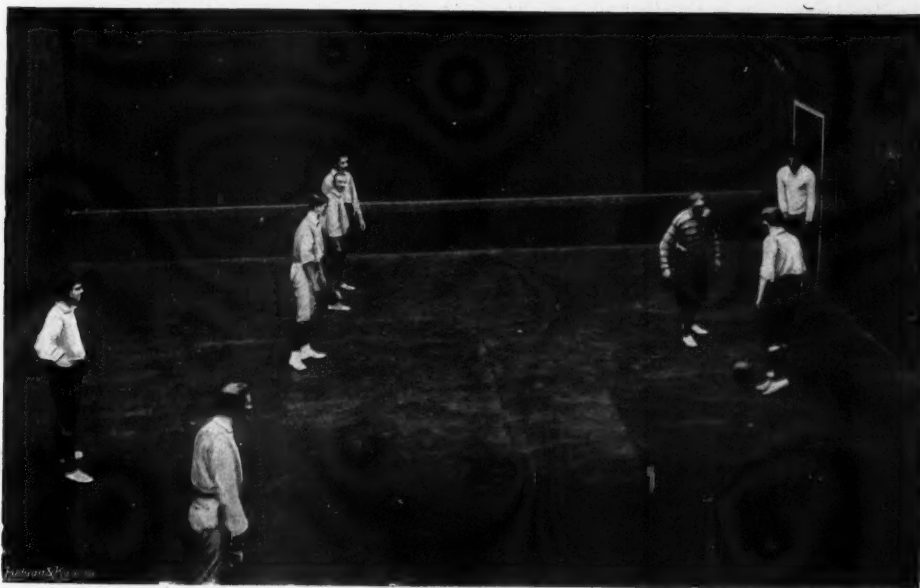
were not first-class—far from it. Those at Queen's Club were in any case much better, and gave an excuse for an agreeable visit to town. A very sensible don of a neighbouring college thought it a pity that the courts should be absolutely wasted, so he leased them for a couple of terms, on purely philo-undergraduate grounds. Then some Merton men, it being an exceptionally wet season, bethought them of getting an Eton football, racket shoes, and football clothes, and playing a kind of wall game in the deserted racket court. Very soon the game "caught on." It was mighty hard work, for there is no rest afforded by the ball being out of bounds, but capital exercise. There is also much art in making the ball cannon off the walls. Heading, volleying, and dribbling can all be practised, and the india-rubber soles prevent accidents from the close quarters at which the game is played. The rules soon took form as Association, so far as possible.

Four a side is the number, one being in goal and three forward, or one in goal, one back, and two forward. The goals, like those in the Eton wall game, are marked out in white on the wall. But each is set diagonally to the other. There are no "shies," as in the Eton game, but the goal-keepers use their hands. The nearest historical approach to it is, or rather was, the "cloister football," played at the old Charterhouse before its removal to Godalming. The "cloisters" there were by no means what is usually associated with that name. They were low, dark, square-built passages, of very old rough brick, with a flat roof and square windows without glass. In these on wet days cloister football was played, to the huge joy of all the bigger boys and the great terror of small ones, who were knocked down on the flags, ground against the bricks of the walls, and squashed flat in scrimmages. Those who lived to tell the tale at new Charterhouse were loud in its praise, and in condemnation of the new ornamental, cold, draughty cloisters, useless for all purposes, and in which cloister football was not allowed even on wet days. For really bad weather in the country this suggests a resource. Fug football might be played in a barn, with the door left open for light. It would in any case be better fun than "passage football" at Eton, and there is always more air in a barn than in a racket court. Unfortunately, there is also the dust of ages on the planks of the walls, but one must not be too particular on a wet day.



CYCLING NOTES.

A CORRESPONDENT of the *World* who is at Cannes has been descanting on the splendid condition of the roads in that neighbourhood, even at this wintry period. "Every day," he says, "cycling parties start for runs into the country, a favourite place being Villeneuve, Loubet, where one can get an excellent luncheon, either in the clean little inn or in a very pretty garden. It is no exaggeration to say," he continues, "that the gardens are still full of roses in bloom; but one has to be here at the end of April to see the flowers at their best. Then the hedges for miles are a mass of colour, and not only please the eye, but exhale the sweetest perfumes. By the time that season of the year comes round, however, most of the English visitors have returned to their dear east winds in London." This is truly an agreeable picture, which must make the English cyclist more than ever disoriented through the winter months. Nevertheless, with a properly-equipped machine it



H. W. Taunt.

CLOSE TO GOAL.

Copyright.



H. W. Taunt.

THE BACK HAS IT.

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is possible, on Southern roads at all events, to do much more riding than may appear practicable to the man who takes cognisance only of the conditions prevailing near his own door, and knows not how much better matters are on country highways of the better class. Richmond Park, too, it may be added, is in excellent condition just now; in fact, rain suits the soil of the roads in that picturesque demesne, and except for a little mud here and there, the surface is much better at the present moment than in summer, when it is very loose and stony, and the source of innumerable punctures.

A thrilling adventure has just been brought to light in the *Lub*, in consequence of a competition having been set afoot under the title of "Unpleasant Experiences." The winner of the prize is a Mr. Forbes, who seven years ago rode over a cliff at Folkestone. He was mounted on a 53in. ordinary at the time, and was going down Folkestone Hill. The brake refused to act, and the machine got beyond control. The hill is exceedingly steep, and a short way down turns abruptly at right angles. Owing to the momentum his bicycle had attained, Mr. Forbes was unable to take the right-angled turn, and the machine bounded through an open gate, across a grass plot a few yards wide, and then straight over the precipice.

He appears to have stuck to his machine, which about 40ft. down caught a projecting ledge. He struck the ground violently with his head, and received a fracture on the left side extending from the temple to the back of the ear. He did not recover consciousness until the third week, but, aided by a robust constitution, he managed—to the surprise of his doctors—to pull through, and is now in the enjoyment of good general health. The only permanent effects of the catastrophe are a total loss of hearing in the right ear, and a tendency to head-throbbing after violent exercise. It may be doubted whether any cyclist ever had so remarkable an experience. The cliff in question is between 150ft. and 200ft. in depth, and, but for the welcome ledge, there is no doubt but that the rider would have been dashed to pieces.

Another competitor describes a very unpleasant quarter of an hour which he had in the neighbourhood of Hoxton last June. He was riding along, when a drunken German dashed into his machine on the near side. The rider was thrown on to his back, with the machine across his chest, and the drunken man sprawling on the top of both. "It was impossible to rise from beneath the double weight," says the rider in question, "although I knew that a tram was meeting me just before I fell, and my neck was across the metals which the

tram must pass over! This realisation was horrible, yet I could not wriggle even an inch away from the line. The next moment was chaos to me, as I only collected loud screams from every woman there, a clatter of horses, and a crowd of down-turned faces from the tram top, and then I was drawn into safety. I was afterwards told that the driver had promptly used his brake, and wung his horse round just in time to clear my head." This experience was harrowing enough, but it appears that subsequently a crowd of "Hooligans" closed round the rider and demanded money for allied services. One fellow made a grab at the cyclist's watch, whilst several others seized various parts of his machine, and, but for the arrival of a detective, he would probably have had to add highway robbery to his other "unpleasant experiences."

The authorities of London City, if they get no other support in their absurd crusade against the cyclist, have earned the approval of Judge French. In a case heard before him at the Shoreditch County Court, a cyclist claimed £12 damages from a cabman who had run into his bicycle and smashed it. The plaintiff denied that the traffic was very congested at the time, or that he stopped so suddenly that the cabman could not help running into him. Thereupon, Judge French asked him if he did not think the City was a very ridiculous place in which to ride a bicycle. The plaintiff's counsel naturally retorted that a cyclist could ride where he liked, and, moreover, that cabmen and others had been warned to take special precautions to avoid accidents. To this Judge French retorted:—"That may be so, but it must throw the necessary traffic out of gear a good deal. The claim is most preposterous, and I think defendant's version the right one. Judgment for defendant, with costs. Nothing can be more stupid than for cyclists to try to get through our congested City traffic, and it will be a service, I should think, when the new police regulation with regard to cyclists is passed." Inasmuch as the bicycle is a "carriage" in law, Judge French has obviously entered upon a very dangerous crusade in attempting to establish the contention that it has less claim to the use of the streets and highways than other vehicles. The non-suiting of the cyclist in the case referred to was clearly the result of prejudice, and based upon the assumption that cyclists had no right to be in the City at all. As well might it be contended that pedestrians had no right to cross the streets because of the ordinary risks of traffic.

THE PILGRIM.

ON THE GREEN.

MR. ELLIS seems to be one of the most consistent of the Oxford University players, and won the last weekly competition with a score of one down to Bogey, starting from scratch. It may be doubted, from the result of the team matches, whether either University has a side quite up to the mark of some recent years, but former experience has inspired the clubs with much respect for them, so that they have taken pains to get strong teams to oppose the Universities. On the same day that Mr. Ellis won at Oxford, a team match between ladies of the Prince's and Littlestone Clubs was played, and the feature of the match was the encounter between Miss Islette Pearson and Miss Amy Pascoe, who halved their match. The result was that

the Prince's Club ladies won the singles, and the ladies of Littlestone the foursomes. Seaford and Eastbourne played a team match on the previous Saturday, the former club winning rather easily, although Mr. Peacock, for the losers, did well in holding Mr. S. H. Fry so hard that the latter, though on his home green, only won by a single hole. On the same day the final of the autumn tournament at Ashdown Forest was won by Mr. C. L. Reade, who worked his way through from scratch and beat Mr. Stephenson in the final tie with great ease. Besides the Royal Eastbourne Club itself, with its course on the ground that has long been known as the links—long before there was any thought of playing golf on it—the Eastbourne people have another course quite handy for them, at Willingdon, near Mr. Freeman Thomas's property. Also, between Eastbourne and Seaford, there is a quaint little course, up on the cliffs, called Birling Gap, very picturesque. Altogether that South Coast country has plenty of opportunities for the golfer. Mr. Willoughby and Mr. Avenit tied for the monthly medal at Willingdon, the other day, at a nett score of 89, each receiving a handicap of twenty-five strokes. There seems to be a liberal spirit of munificence about the Willingdon handicap committee that we should like to see imitated more widely. But the weather has been so rough that we have not seen good scores in great number. At the Hoylake December meeting the best nett return was 81, by Mr. H. D. Smith, with thirteen strokes allowed; and of the scratch scores the lowest was Mr. W. C. Glover's 85. It does not seem, it is true, that the real cracks of the club, Mr. Ball and Mr. Hilton, were competing. At least if they did compete they can have sent in no score worth recording—an unlikely supposition. But at Aberdeen, on the Balgownie course, they had their best—Mr. M. M. Duncan, who is handicapped to owe three—in the field for the monthly meeting, but he could do no better than an 82. It is true that this did not, in all probability, represent his real form, for the winner, Mr. H. C. Haddon, who receives eight strokes, was round in a gross score of only a stroke higher, and won the handicap prize with a nett 75 easily enough. Mr. J. M. Ferguson, who plays from scratch, tied with Mr. Duncan for the gross score prize.

We see that A. Tingey, who has so long been the professional to the Royal West Norfolk Club at Brancaster, is going, if he has not gone already, to the West Herts Club. Here he will, no doubt, be more in the centre of things than at Brancaster, though by no means on so good a green. And let this be said with all respect to the excellent inland course of West Herts. It is excellent, but it is inland; it is not Brancaster. Tingey is a fine player, who did first-class work a year or two ago in some matches over the Newcastle (County Down) course, one of the finest greens in Ireland.

We hear rumours of a team of lady golfers about to visit America—of course on the warpath. From all the accounts that come across the ocean, they will be likely to meet with a royal welcome (if Americans will permit the epithet), and it will be interesting to see how our British ladies' talent compares with that of Miss Beatrix Hoyt, thrice championess of the United States. It is unfortunate that we cannot hope to see her matched with Lady Margaret Scott, to speak of that lady by the maiden name under which she thrice won our home championship of dames. But Lady Margaret has retired from the arena, more's the pity.



"La Poupée."

THE delightful "La Poupée" has come again, its run briefly interrupted by a mistake—the mistake of "The Royal Star." But the difference between the two pieces makes us appreciate "La Poupée" the more; the humour of its story strikes one with fuller force after the inanities of "The Royal Star." "The Royal Star" was nothing at all; "La Poupée" is genuine comic opera, of a genuinely comical kind we very seldom get nowadays. Its score is from the pen of one man; consequently at the Prince of Wales's we get something which we get nowhere else now, except at the Savoy—a symmetrical and balanced composition, with no "interpolated numbers" to spoil its style and its intention. Such additions to the original score as there are, I believe, are from the pen of Audran himself.

One of the chief charms of "La Poupée" is that you can see it again and again; and every time you see it you enjoy its melody the more. This is a sure sign of good music, light or heavy. The lightest of music may be artistic and original, rapid and not vapid. The heaviest may be merely ponderous, and nothing beyond. That of "La Poupée," light and unpretentious as it is, so overflows with prettiness, it is so sparkling, so spontaneous, that one hears it again and again, and could go on hearing it, at intervals, with a never-diminishing pleasure. Offenbach and Sullivan, at their best, have the same quality; and until one tries to hear more than twice or thrice the music of the most successful "musical comedies"—with one or two notable exceptions—one cannot appreciate the difference between the grade of the music of Audran, Offenbach, and

Sullivan, and that of many of the most popular composers of the day.

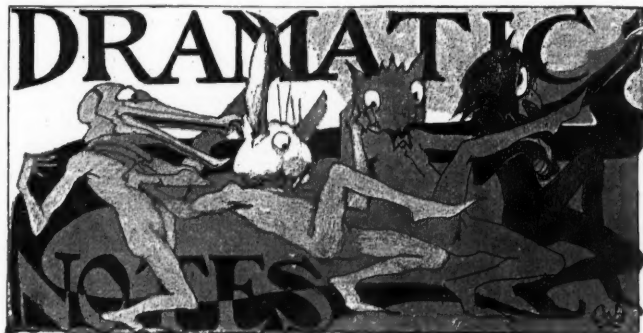
There is another growing up among them, it may be whispered in parentheses, who, if he does not disappoint us, will reach the goal of Audran and the others—Mr. Sidney Jones, the composer of "The Geisha" and "A Greek Slave." In each of these there are fancy, originality, and charm, and "A Greek Slave," while not so catchily joyous as "The Geisha," has far more real beauty and enduring qualities. We may hope to hear a comic opera equally delightful as "La Poupée" by Mr. Jones one of these days. If so, Mr. Jones will prove a rare exception, for what the Frenchmen have, which the Englishmen usually have not, is the gift of being light without being trivial, melodious without being merely jingling.

"La Poupée" has none of the meretricious aids of spectacle and beautiful stage pictures to help it along, no lovely costumes, no extravagant scenery. It has only its joyousness to attract, and that is all in all. The music, when I heard it first on the memorable first night when it was introduced to London, struck one as being bright and pretty, some of the numbers especially pretty. But nothing more remarkable than that. The second time it grew on one. The third it was better yet. That is the sign of music which lives. When one finds oneself pricking up one's ears for the air which is coming, however many the number of times it has been heard already, then one may be pretty sure that the music is worthy and more than merely tune, though tune is a very excellent thing in itself.

In addition to all this there is of course the story, and the humour of its telling, that has a very great deal to do with the success of "La Poupée." Mr. Arthur Sturges has not only

retained the bouquet of Ordonneau, but he has added much native fun of his own. The story is frankly described as "impossible." In design it ranks with the fancies of Grimm and Hans Andersen. But it is very, very funny in its treatment. The language is simple and not at all ambitious; but it is terse and whimsical. To Mr. Willie Edouin, most comical of comedians, the possessor of a fund of rich humour which bubbles over at every opportunity and permeates the whole affair, who is never at a loss for a "gag," who turns everything to laughter and keeps us amused by the wild extravagance of his humour, the author, composer, and manager owe much. He is really the mainstay of the piece. To Mr. Norman Salmond's fine voice, which he uses so admirably, and his quiet and artistic method of acting, we are indebted for some of the most delightful moments of a delightful evening. To Mr. Courtice Pounds, most lively of tenors, we are grateful for some sweet songs and much lively playing.

Miss Stella Gastelle is the latest Alesia. She has been portraying the character for many months in the country, so had the advantage of familiarity with her part to help her in her London *début*. She made a distinct success. She has not the heaven-sent gift of "personality" to any very great extent; but she has a sweet and flexible voice, and she acts with a pretty sense of humour. She differentiates between the doll and the girl with much cleverness, and, more than all, she evidently enjoys her work, and so infects the audience. Mr. Fred Storey returns with his burlesque fun to further enliven the proceedings, and Mr. Humphery and Miss Clara Jacks keep the ball rolling merrily. "La Poupée's" return can only be for a little while, but for the Christmas holidays one can imagine nothing more enlivening and more charming for the young and the old, not to mention the middle-aged.



WHAT shall we go out for to see at Christmas-time? is the question many thousands will be asking before the world is much older. Well, there will be plenty to choose from, if we include the theatre only. Let us take a glance round and focus things. First, of course, there are the pantomimes, those gigantic conglomerations of gorgeousness and fun—"The Forty Thieves" at Drury Lane, with a scene of glass and water, of which all London will soon be talking, and "Dick Whittington" at the Adelphi, with a Slave Market which will probably set the Thames on fire. In addition to these there are, in the suburbs, over twenty pantomimes, not a few of them quite worthy of patronage by a public which usually confines itself to the West End.

For the advantage of those whose residence for the festival will be without the circle, let the hand of one who has sampled the wares, or knows of what they will consist, guide his readers to the entertainments which he thinks are really not too suburban for the tastes of the public which reads these lines. Blackheath and Greenwich and their environs possess a really handsome and commodious theatre in the Broadway, Deptford, presided over by Miss Cissy Grahame, so long a favourite actress in the West End of London. Her pantomime of "Aladdin" will almost certainly be worth seeing. The Pavilion Theatre at Mile End is not likely to attract many readers of COUNTRY LIFE who do not live that way; but if any of them care to undertake the journey, they may rely on an amusing and handsome production in "Robinson Crusoe." So, too, at the Crown Theatre, Peckham, a new and charming theatre, within easy reach of the outlying suburbs, where the management is one to which we may look with confidence for a fine pantomime in "Dick Whittington." The Borough Theatre, Stratford, though its immediate neighbourhood may not concern us very nearly, may appeal to those who live beyond it, and to those "Cinderella," redressed and brought down to date from one of Mr. Oscar Barrett's West End pantomimes, will provide light and graceful entertainment for the children. The Grand, Islington, is always a Mecca of playgoers at Christmas-time, live where they may; and though Islington's pantomime may, perhaps, be a little too highly flavoured for some palates, and its humours a little too boisterous, yet the Grand has always a good pantomime, which this year is based on the story of "The Babes in the Wood." Exactly the same remarks apply to the Surrey's Yuletide programme.

"Aladdin" at Brixton, and the pantomime at the Metropole, Denmark Hill, will be more or less on West End lines, and may be attended with absolute faith in their harmlessness and spirit. "Cinderella," at Crouch End, is another "annual" which the children are almost sure to enjoy, and, as with those just mentioned, is unlikely to be tainted with vulgarity. The management of the beautiful new Coronet Theatre at Notting Hill Gate, though this is their first pantomime, have a reputation elsewhere for excellence in this branch of the drama, and "Cinderella," in all likelihood, will not be found wanting. Omission from this brief list implies nothing more than that the writer is dubious as to whether the particular style of entertainment of the others would appeal to his circle of readers.

So much for the pantomimes; but there is plenty of theatrical fare of

other kinds. "The Musketeers" at Her Majesty's, for instance, with its glory and its glitter, should prove very magnetic during the festive season; the Gaiety, Daly's, and the Prince of Wales's retain their present programmes, all highly suitable to the period. Laughter will hold both its sides at the Vaudeville and Terry's; "The Belle of New York" will pursue her con uering way at the Shaftesbury. "The Three Musketeers" at the Globe is another lively and flamboyant show, peculiarly adapted to holly time. "The Sorcerer" and "Trial by Jury" at the Savoy are admirable fun-makers, and "Little Miss Nobody" at the Lyric is a lively young damsel likely to prove attractive. So that, you see, there is a rich store to choose from, and those in search of merriment will not have too far to go.

PHŒBUS.



THINGS SEASONABLE.

IN the space at my disposal I will not attempt to give particulars of the conventional Christmas fare. But here are a few dishes which are not likely to be seen everywhere, and may possibly reflect credit on the cook, and therefore on her employer.

HAM WITH ORANGE SALAD.

Soak the ham from twelve to eighteen hours, and if it is thoroughly matured from two to two and a-half days will not be too long; in either case, change the water three or four times. Put the ham in a boiler (or kettle), and entirely cover it with cold water; when the water boils remove the scum as it rises, and then add a bouquet garni, two turnips, two onions, each stuck with three cloves, two large carrots, half a small head of celery, a parsnip, and a dozen whole peppers; draw the kettle to the side of the stove, and let the ham simmer gently for five hours, and rather longer if it is very large. When it is done, take the ham out of the water, and after removing the outer skin place it in a large stewpan, and pour over it a bottle of champagne (if a small ham a pint will be sufficient); cover the pan, and let the ham simmer in the wine for three-quarters of an hour, basting it frequently. Then take it up, glaze it, and serve with rich brown sauce to which a large wineglassful of the champagne left over after cooking the ham has been added. The orange salad which should accompany the ham is prepared thus: Peel four or six Jaffa oranges, remove all the white pith, and divide them into sections, then very carefully take the skin from the fruit, and also the pips. Make a dressing with a dessert-spoonful of salad oil, a teaspoonful of lemon-juice, a tablespoonful of white wine (or sherry will answer the purpose), and a pinch of powdered sugar; mix thoroughly, then dip the pieces of orange into the dressing, arrange them in a salad bowl, and sprinkle over them some finely-chopped chervil and tarragon, and garnish with French stoneless cherries. The salad should be placed on ice for about half-an-hour before it is served.

POUDING DE PARIS EN SURPRISE.

Butter a mould of suitable size and shape (a high mould is best), sprinkle it with flour, fill it with a light Genoise paste, and bake it carefully in a well-heated oven. When the cake is done turn it on to a sieve, and after allowing it time to cool, cut off the bottom (to the thickness of about three-quarters of an inch) with a sharp knife, and then remove the middle, leaving the cake not less than half an inch in thickness at the sides and top. Mix two tablespoonfuls of peach brandy and one tablespoonful of water with twelve ounces of icing sugar; add a few drops of carmine, and make the glaze just warm in a saucepan, then brush the outside of the cake all over with it, and sprinkle it thickly with chopped almonds which have been blanched and baked until brown, and put it away for some hours before it is required, so that the cake case may become quite firm. Take a bottle of peaches, preserved in syrup; strain off rather more than a quarter of a pint of the syrup, put it into a small stewpan with half an ounce of sheet gelatine, and stir until the latter is dissolved, and then remove the pan from the stove. Pass the peaches through a sieve, measure three-quarters of a pint of the purée, and put it into a basin; add the prepared syrup, and place on ice until it begins to get thick; then stir in three-quarters of a pint of whipped cream which has been tinted a pale peach colour, slightly sweetened and flavoured with peach brandy; continue to stir for a few minutes, keeping the basin embedded in ice all the time. Then turn the mixture into a mould of a similar shape, only slightly smaller than that in which the cake was baked, and freeze the contents until they are very hard. When required, turn the ice out of the mould on to the bottom of the cake, which should be placed on a silver dish. Slip the cake case quickly over the ice, and the last thing before serving the *pouding* pour a large glassful of Mrs. A. B. Marshall's Silver Rays Rum (which has been made warm) round the dish, and set light to the spirit. This should be done outside the dining-room door.

CHESTNUT CREAM.

Grate some freshly-prepared marrons glacés, using about six ounces; whip three-quarters of a pint of thick cream, sweeten it, flavour it with maraschino, and add the grated chestnuts; mix well, tint the cream a pale fawn colour, and place it on ice for an hour before it is required, but do not let it freeze. Fill some little fancy paper cases with the cream, scatter some chopped pistachio nuts over the top, and place a glacé cherry in the middle.

ANCHOVY CROQUETTES.

Place six (or more) boned anchovies in a basin, cover them with boiling milk, and leave them for six minutes; then take them out, drain them, remove the skin, and pound them in a mortar with the yolks of two hard-boiled eggs and one ounce of butter; add a teaspoonful of grated Parmesan cheese and a dust of curry powder, and mix with a tablespoonful of stiff béchamel sauce, and colour with carmine. Roll out some puff paste thinly, stamp it into rounds with a fluted cutter about the size of a wine-glass; place a little of the anchovy mixture on one half of each, fold the paste over, wet the edges, and press them

together. Brush the croquettes with some beaten egg, and then scatter over them some very fine dry bread-crumbs which have been coloured a clear red with carmine, and fry them quickly in plenty of boiling fat until the pastry is a pale golden colour. Send the savoury to table garnished with chervil.

The success of a dinner nowadays depends almost as much upon the arrangement of the table as the viands, etc., served thereon, and nothing contributes to the enjoyment of a dinner like the appropriate lighting of the table. I have often wondered how in the old days of the elaborate gaselier, shedding its volume of blinding light on the dead-white cloth, and at the same time vitiating the atmosphere and spoiling complexions, anyone really enjoyed a dinner. How well I recall the impression produced by this distressing form of illumination on my innocent head when, as a little girl, I was allowed, in the old-fashioned but injudiciously-conceived form of "treat," to "go down to dessert" after a country house dinner-party. Then came a revolution in the form of a shaded candle, which is still often the main features of illumination where electric light is impossible, and is still a source of anxiety to host and hostess, guests and servants, in many a house where the latest invention for dispensing with this source of anxiety has not yet been taken advantage of. I refer to Clarke's patent "Cricklite" lamp. One is apt to associate the word lamp with oil, and too often with smoke; neither of these is associated with the "Cricklite," which is in itself merely a large double-wicked wax light, resting in a cut glass saucer and protected by a glass shade. These form a lamp which may be bought to fit any candle-holder, or to be fixed into handsome standards of cut glass, brass, or Royal Worcester porcelain, holding from four to seven lights each. Corner lights for the dinner-table, to correspond with the standards, are made to hold from one to three lamps. The latter can be arranged about a table more conveniently than electric lamps, and give a soft, steady, clear white light, without any glare; and as the wick is always on the same level, and does not require trimming, there is no trouble about "burning down" or spluttering. The lights burn for five hours each, and are sold in shilling boxes containing twelve, and glass shades and cup cost from 1s. 6d., and the holders and standards from a few shillings to £8, according to size, design, and number of lights. Charming and artistic silk shades, in a variety of colourings, are supplied from 4s. 6d. each. Nothing could be better either for decorating the Christmas dinner-table, or for seasonable presents, than some of these lights and

standards. Around the base of some of the latter, ornamental flower-containers are part of the arrangement. Those who do not reside in or near town should write to Messrs. Clarke's Show Rooms, 75, Regent Street, for an illustrated catalogue.

CHARLOTTE RUSSE.

The Water Turned into Blood.

A REMARKABLE destruction of fish, caused by the sea water turning red and stinking, is reported from Narragansett Bay. The appearances were just those described in the Mosaic account of the Nile being turned into blood; and the cause has also been ascertained. The water became thick and red, and gave out a disgusting odour. Myriads of shrimp and blue crabs, and vast numbers of eels, menhaden, tautog, and flatfish came up to the surface and to the edge of the shore, as though struggling to get out of the noxious water. Indeed the shrimp and crabs were observed actually to climb out of the water upon stakes and buoys and even upon the iron cylinders which support one of the bridges, and which must have been very hot in the bright sun. In several instances, on two days, hundreds of blue crabs were caught by a single individual in a few minutes' time at the mouth of the Seekonk. On the following day, September 10th, and for several days afterwards, hardly a live crab or shrimp could be found. Along the shores, however, in the same vicinity, cartloads of dead shrimp were piled up in windrows, and among them were strewn great numbers of crabs and fish of various kinds, especially menhaden and eels. This singular behaviour and alarming mortality of marine animals was reported from nearly every station at which the red water occurred, and from no other station, which indicates that the two phenomena are related as cause and effect.

The cause of the reddening of the water was the presence of untold multitudes of an animalcule, the genus *Peridinium*, which swarmed in such numbers as to taint this great area of sea. The animalcules which, according to Salt, produce the red colour in the Red Sea, may also be due to this form, and the same cause may, perhaps, be ascribed to the red colour of the sea off Iceland in 1649.

Porter quotes the following passage from an eye-witness of a similar occurrence at Porebunder, on the coast of Khattywar, India, where the red water is extremely common: "The colour of the sea water on Saturday evening last, October 27th, 1849, was changed from its usual tint to a deep red, emitting a most foul smell; the fish speedily were all destroyed, and washed upon the beach in large quantities, etc." Though the narrator believed that this might be due to a submarine eruption of mud, Mr. Carter is inclined to ascribe it to some animalcule, most probably *Peridinium*. He also directs attention to the Mosaic account of the plague of Egypt given in the following verses: "And all the waters that were in the river were turned to blood." "And the fish that was in the river died; and the river stank, and the Egyptians could not drink of the water of the river; and there was blood throughout all the land of Egypt."

TO MAKE A BEAVER PARK.

AN article published some twelve months ago in *COUNTRY LIFE*, describing the beaver colony at Leonardslee, suggested that the example of repatriating the beaver in this country, so successfully carried out by Sir Edmund Loder, might be followed elsewhere. Since then more than one experiment of the kind has been tried, though on a smaller scale; and we hear that it is in contemplation to establish beavers on one of the largest eyots in the Thames, where they would have an abundant supply of willows and osiers as food. Meantime the illustration of A BRITISH BEAVER given herewith may be an encouragement to those who would like additional evidence to

that afforded at Leonardslee that this, by no means the most recently extinct of our indigenous quadrupeds, is able and willing to be restored to his own home. It is by no means necessary to begin a beaver colony without some previous experience of the animals. A single beaver kept about the house, with occasional access to water, will become quite tame, make himself at home, and teach his owner something of his wants and wishes, especially in the way of food, before others are purchased to make a settlement. Carrots, dog-biscuits, lettuces, cabbages, and as many tops and branches of trees and brushwood as can be spared, suit them well. The only drawback to the tame beaver

as a pet is that if kept in the house he is afflicted by a mania for picking up anything portable and cramming it into any hole or corner of the room which he considers ought to be stopped up. When kept in huts and tents in Canada, this has always made him an impossible pet; and in a case recently reported to the writer, a domesticated beaver kept in a large town showed exactly the same propensity.

THE BEAVER'S LONG COAT, seen in the illustration, is very unlike the finished fur which makes the best collars and cuffs for men's fur coats. In preparing the skin all the long hair is removed, and only the soft under-fur left. Wet and uncomfortable as the beaver looks when swimming, or when JUST OUT OF THE WATER, he is really perfectly dry, except his nose, feet, toes, and tail. The under-fur is so close and soft that no water can penetrate to his skin. It has been known to lie in soak for



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A BRITISH BEAVER.

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two and a-half hours without being wetted through.

It is no more trouble to start a beaver colony than a rabbit-warren; not nearly so much, indeed, if the warren is a big one, for rabbit-fencing is expensive, and a large warren needs a warrener. On the other hand, the beavers are far more amusing, and are the only creatures except bees which, when once established, afford an increasing intellectual treat to their owner by their constructive works and engineering. Any owner of part of a stream of running water, even of rooyds. of a tiny brook, can have a "beaver park," and when once this is enclosed, and the creatures settled in their quarters, they will do the rest themselves. It is, in fact, much better to confine the beavers in one place. It keeps them out of mischief, and makes them more visible than they would otherwise be; for though their natural instinct is to concentrate labour, and work on a single embankment, they sometimes scatter, and live in holes in the bank, where they are not much more interesting than big water-rats. This, for instance, is the way in which many of the surviving beavers in North Norway live.

But there are thousands of suitable sites for a successful "beaver park." Any of the little tributaries of the Surrey streams, wandering through tiny coombes and copses of alder, are just the place for beavers, the only drawback to these being that the soft soil makes it rather difficult to enclose them. They will dig under the foundations of a fence and roam away. An ordinary little loamy-banked brook is, perhaps, as good as any, and the more trees there are (to start with) on the arca selected the better. The beavers will cut them all down, if they can. But those to be kept can be protected with metal guards up to 3½ft., the maximum height at which a beaver can use his teeth-chisels, and to see how they cut down, cut up, transport, and use the rest, is part of the fun of the beaver's proprietor.

Corrugated iron, ugly though it is, makes the best fence for a beaver run. It is far better, for instance, than the rat-proof railing used at the Zoo, and less expensive. Its chief advantages are that the beavers cannot see through it, and consequently can be approached and watched with ease. It makes an "exhibition case"; and as half the interest is to watch the beavers at work—and they are very shy, and apt to do all their building at night if they fancy they are overlooked—this secures one of the main objects of their maintenance. They cannot bite through it, and it should be sunk in the ground at least 2ft. This is easily done, and prevents their burrowing beneath it. A

temporary house can be supplied to the beavers at first, but they leave this as soon as possible, dig a hole in the bank, carry in plenty of wood shavings from the trees they have cut down (they will begin this business at once, just as we begin picture-hanging or carpet-laying in a new house), and when they have got "a roof over their heads" of the kind they like, they look about them to see how to set about bringing things up to proper beaver form.

What they do, and the line on which they go to work, depend mainly on the kind of place in which they find themselves. They are not automata, do not work by one rule, and seem to have as clear views as to the needs and possibilities of hydraulic engineering as a Dutch Board of Works.

If, for instance, there is very little fall of water, unlike Leonardslee, where a rapid little brook rushes tumbling down a loamy coombe, the dam or barrier will be less interesting, though it is seldom omitted. But, according to American experience, the beavers in still waters become canal makers and lumber-men. They clear roads through the copse and brushwood, biting off all stumps and bushes in their way, and along these they roll the billets of wood, generally from 2½ft. to 3½ft. long, which they mean to use in their dam, and which are too heavy to drag. Beavers were the original log-rollers, evidence, if any were wanting, of the early perfection of their social system. To these rolling-ways it usually occurs to the beavers to cut canals from the water. Probably the idea is suggested to them by the wet, muddy condition of the ship-way where the logs are launched into the water. In any case they will scratch out and bite out—for they positively enjoy carrying mud in their mouths—

2yds. or 3yds. of canal in a night; and if the ground be flat they will prolong these canals for considerable distances. In the Northern flats of North America they often connect two streams at some point above where they converge into a lake and make a beaver island. (There is a place on the Severn called Beaver Island to this day, but whether it is formed in this way the writer knows not.) If the stream be very gentle, the dam, or embankment across it, will be straight; if the stream is both wide and rapid, the embankment is sometimes shaped like a horse-shoe; in every case it is perfectly flat at the top, so that the water runs evenly over it and cuts no gaps. In an ordinary brook the beavers will cut up the branches of all trees which they can fell into lengths, and build a dam. This forms a pool above it, and as the pool silts up, and overflows to right and left, they widen the dam. Their object



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JUST OUT OF THE WATER.

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THE BEAVER'S LONG COAT.

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is to enjoy the deep water in the lake made above as a place of refuge and a store-house for food, and to maintain enough water always at the same level to cover the entrance to their lodges. On a Scotch stream where there are rocks and a fast current, they will, if they have their liberty, make six or seven dams, one above the other, to break the force of the water in flood time. Left to themselves, there is absolutely no limit to their industry in this way. Few trees are too large for them to attempt to cut down, and idleness has no charms for them. They are expert at all the dodges known to the makers of reservoirs, docks, and canals. They can dive, dig, cut timber, plant piles, take stones and mud under water or bring them up, plaster, and, in a rough way, make "wattle and dab" by interlacing branches and puddling them with clay. When swimming a beaver looks



C. Reid, Wishaw, N.D.

LIKE A GIANT WATER-RAT.

LIKE A GIANT WATER-RAT.

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In feeding beavers it is always best to supply them with as many boughs and branches as can be spared. They eat the bark of these, and having done so, cut the boughs up to use in their embankments. Ordinary ash and hazel faggots thrown in please them well enough, and as they do not carry the wood off at once to the dam, much of this can be taken away and used for fire-wood when the beavers have barked it. They do not need bark as food, but the exercise of cutting it off, carrying the wood, and using it in building, does them good in providing occupation and exercise. In the parts of Montana north of the Yellowstone Valley, beavers are now encouraged by the ranch-owners, who are much obliged to them for the work they do in damming up streams without payment. The pools so formed make valuable reservoirs in summer, and would cost thousands of dollars to plan out and execute by white labour.

C. J. CORNISH



MONDAY of last week, when the Southdown met at Beresford Manor, Plumpton Crossways, may be taken as a typical example of a day's hunting in the Weald of Sussex. The morning was characterised by a long woodland hunt, while those who remained until the afternoon were thoroughly well rewarded by a gallop in the open over a capital piece of grass country. A high glass and a well-defined dampness in the air seemed to foretell scent, and a better hunting morn it would be difficult to imagine. After the covert at the cross roads had been called upon in vain, a move was made to a wood near Bineham, where a fox was quickly roused, but before he had run many yards he succeeded in getting to ground at the last-named place. His ejection had almost been given up, and huntsman and hounds were just moving off, when our fox suddenly appeared upon the scene, and with the leading hounds close to his brush was coursed back in the direction from whence he had come. He now turned his mask northward, and faced the open. We were just beginning to congratulate ourselves on being in for a good spin, when our quarry's craven heart again failed, and he ignominiously sought shelter below ground in an earth on the west side of Chailley North Common, where he was left to go in peace. One would think that when once a fox had been bolted from a hole he would not again go to ground unless he found his strength failing him, but this is by no means the case; and in these days, when there are few stub-bred foxes, the vulpine tribe in general seem to have a great liking for mother earth. Home Wood was now called upon; but it was not until the covert near the Chailley Workhouse was tried that hounds were successful. Then followed a woodland hunt for about an hour's duration; "in and out and round about" did those persevering little bitches pursue the fox, ably assisted by their keen and hard-working huntsman, until at last the pack obtained the blood that they so richly deserved. Although the lengthening shadows showed that we had but few hours of daylight before us, the word was given for Plumpton Osier-bed, one of the best draws in the whole country, and a very sure find of late years, though the acreage must be extremely small, and it is by no means a very retired spot. After hounds had been thrown in, an anxious minute or two elapsed before the welcome chorus told us that we had not come here in vain. Once found, our fox was quickly away in a westerly direction, and we soon found ourselves slipping over that nice piece of grass country towards Middleton; but before

reaching this place a somewhat long check occurred at the little covert near Street. Our fox must have turned short to the left here, for he was presently viewed proceeding towards Plumpton Church, and he actually ran through the same field that saw the end of the point-to-point races last season. The pace was now excellent as far as the Novington coverts, where another short turn brought us once more to Plumpton Osier-bed. Meanwhile some stiff fencing had been encountered, and though many falls occurred, no one was hurt, I believe. In fact, no one ever does seem to come to much harm by falls in Sussex, and the trappy fences bring plenty of grief too. Surely this may in a measure be attributed to the hedges not being plashed, consequently one does not meet with those awkward growing binders that are to be seen in several counties. In many Sussex hedges there is a great deal of dead wood, and this, if at all rotten, tumbles down in front of one, like the walls of Jericho did of old. But I must get forward, for hounds are now running towards Middleton once more; but again our fox turns back, and on reaching Novington he elects to seek safety in the depths of Warrington Wood, a covert of considerable size. Darkness was now coming on rapidly, so I turned towards home, and fear that Fred was cheated of his fox by the gathering gloom.

Friday's meet at Hurstpierpoint produced no great amount of sport, although a couple of fairly good gallops were brought off. Hounds went at once to Danny, and found a fox, which took them by Muddleswood to Park Wood at Newtimber. The next point was Newtimber Holt, and on reaching the Giles the London road was crossed, the fox being finally lost in Stanmer Park. Home Patch proved blank, so we trotted off to the little covert near Ditching, where the necessary was forthcoming. After a few fields in the vale had been crossed, we were doomed to hill-hunting once more. Hounds ran at a good pace as far as Ditching Beacon, and then raced away to Stanmer Park, where they marked their quarry to ground.

It is a fact which has often been noted that foxes run the same lines not only year after year but even generation after generation. Last week I told of the great run from Norton Gorse to Gartree Hill. Turning over the pages of some old sporting magazines, I found that nearly 100 years ago a fox ran almost exactly the same line. So similar are the runs of to-day to the chases of the past that it seems not unlikely that after all our ancestors did not enjoy much better sport than we do now. Not having the fear of hunting correspondents before their eyes, it may be feared that our forefathers were wont to add to the length of their runs and cut off something from the time they occupied. Unless we allow for this, we should have to admit that hounds and horses were faster in our grandfathers' time than they are at the present day, which is certainly not the case. There is, however, one point to be taken into consideration in estimating the time occupied in passing between the given points fifty or sixty years ago. An old Midland M.F.H., whose father and brother both had hounds before him, told me that within his memory the country was far more open than it is at the present. It was impossible to help wishing that the country over which the Belvoir ran for a liberal 40min. from Syston on Tuesday was somewhat more open, or that the fences at all events were not quite so big. The fox made a very straight point for Hough-on-Hill, where, by the way, he beat them fairly. Those who got away with hounds, and who were not morbidly particular as to the places where they jumped the fences, saw the run. The rest dropped behind.

The Belvoir pack always keep getting forward, and the rider who would see he hunt must do the same. On such a day the horseman needs a bold horse, or a very stout heart, or he may owe his presence to the fact of riding a keen horse whose mouth is deaf (pardon the bull) to the fears of his rider. Under these circumstances comparatively few saw the run, and peraps it might be possible for the present writer to give a comparatively complete list of those who did not. This was by far the best gallop of the week up to the time I am writing.

The Cottesmore were enveloped in fog at Tilton on the same day, and spent the morning running about the woods, the dulness of the weather and of the sport being redeemed later on by a scurry from the Osier-bed to Skeffington; but then, you know, that is but a little way.

The Quorn had a poor day on Monday from Grimston. Four foxes were hunted in the course of the day, but none of them gave much sport. It is possible to get much enjoyment out of a slow hunting run, but it is very difficult to take a rose-coloured view of the day's sport when foxes dodge backwards and forwards, and when no sooner have you settled down in a nice place with the

pack than you find you are absolutely lost. "Hounds now," you say to yourself, "will most certainly begin to run really hard," and you bustle along to get on terms with them again, only to find that the pack are being lifted to a holloa in a different direction and your labour is lost. Thus a bad run tires a horse more than a good one.

On Wednesday I took train for the provinces, intending to give the readers of COUNTRY LIFE something quite new in the hunting line. But let me have sympathy, if not much interest, when I say that I spent Thursday in a wood of some four hundred acres hunting the echoes of horn and hound, and plunging fetlock deep in the slimiest, stickiest clay that I ever saw (and I have hunted from Park Farm, Waterferry, with Lord Maclesfield in bygone days). With no scent, and a light-tongued pack, the sport was not good. It seems ungrateful to mention the hunt, and I refrain. But I have burned some two hundred words of useful "copy" on the joys of woodland hunting, and go back to Leicestershire to-morrow. X.

The Ruling Passion.

THIS picture, which is sent to us by a kindly subscriber out of sheer love of animals and of the picturesque, strikes us as being the embodiment of a characteristic story of the moors. The scene was Aberfeldie; the time was the torrid season of August last which we all remember. Perhaps we think we should like it back again, but in truth it was awfully warm. Ponto had ranged the moor honestly, and although he was no setter, and therefore not as thirsty as an American between



"THERE'S MANY A SLIP."

meals, he longed for a drink. On the arid moor he found a peaty pool and entered it. But even as the lukewarm water cooled his legs, the delicious scent came to him. He winded birds. Even as he was about to drink, the paralysis which comes from the vicinity of grouse seized him. His tail stiffened, he crouched a little, he held up his right fore paw. As characteristic a picture is this as ever we saw.



December 20th, 1898.

MY DEAR ROGER,—

It is not often that I have to plead guilty to the charge of depression and lowness of spirits, but to-day I seem to have sunk into the lowest depths of gloom. Nor is this uncanny happening peculiar to myself alone, for nearly every man I have spoken to this afternoon confesses to a similar mental condition. I can only attribute it to the near approach of Christmas. Why is it that at this time of conventional good cheer and festivity the average man thinks it necessary to assume a "dejected" haviour of the visage, and to growl out unpleasing epithets concerning Christmas-time and its obligations? I suppose it is really because the season's merry-making is conven-

tional, and that this depressing attitude of mine is due merely to a natural revolt against the having to be light-hearted and liberal to order. I am not at all sure in my own mind, however, that Christmas literature alone is not responsible for much of this annual dolefulness. Twenty years ago the "Christmas number" was kept within reasonable bounds, and one rather welcomed it than otherwise. Now in London alone the total of these double, extra, and special Christmas numbers issued by weekly and monthly papers amounts to over one hundred and eighty. It was Dickens of course who, first with his "Christmas Carol," issued as a separate volume, and later on with his "Christmas Stories" as a supplement to *Household Words*, started the fashion which has now reached this unlooked-for development. Then the illustrated papers took it up, and you can remember how we as children looked forward to the Christmas number of the "Illustrated" with the coloured plate which helped year by year to add to the nursery picture gallery. The monthly magazines followed suit, and it only remains for the daily papers to borrow another hint from their trans-Atlantic brethren and, like the *New York Herald*, to celebrate Christmas Day by a special issue, printed in colours, and outvying even the productions of artistic Paris in the perfection of its printing and the beauty of its illustrations. Talking of Christmas numbers, G—, who has just been reading an article somewhere on the subject, tells me that the *Graphic* has already a dummy copy of its Christmas number for 1899, and will start printing it in January.

G—, by the way, who is, as you know, *tout-à-fait* "artistic" in his tastes, has been telling me about the movement which is on foot on behalf of the widow of the late Gleeson White, to whom I think I introduced you when you were up in town last June. White probably did more than any other man of our generation for the cause of English art, though probably to the general public his name is chiefly known as a writer of light magazine and newspaper articles. The amount of unsigned work he did, however, was enormous, and the bulk of it was directed towards pleading the cause of the younger and more hopeful painters and sculptors of his day, rather than towards making the general reader acquainted with the fact that as regards decorative art England is now in a position to teach the rest of the world, France not excluded. There are scores of now well-known artists among us who owe their position almost entirely to the attention directed to their work in the first instance by Gleeson White. He was, without any exception, the hardest-working writer I have ever known; he lived all his life simply and economically, and yet at his death he was able to leave his wife and family little beyond his library and the memory of a good man. A fund is being raised for the widow, but it seems to me very little has been done to make this fact public, and up to the present I believe it has barely reached £400. I should have thought this was clearly a case for a Civil List grant.

Upon my word Kipling seems to be about the only author of the day who has a real living interest for others than purely bookish people. I overheard old — and —, whom I should scarcely suspect of reading anything beyond the money article of the *Times*, discussing, with quite an amount of heat, his latest schoolboy's story. I can't say they approached it exactly from the literary point of view, but, at all events, they had read it, and were arguing with an amusing seriousness whether it afforded a true presentment of schoolboy character or no. For myself, I am inclined to regard it as one of Kipling's failures; and it has led me to gravely question the realistic truth of that repertorial faculty with a high degree of which I have always been inclined to credit him. I have taken his Anglo-Indian sketches on trust hitherto, but if they are no truer to life than his schoolboys I find myself shaking my head. L— was agreeing with me on this point the other day. As you may remember, he had five years of schoolmastering after he left Baliol. This was long enough to give him an insight into boyish character, and yet not too long to conventionalise his ideas. He pointed out that the schoolboy's schemes and plots are never consistently carried through, like those of Kipling's urchins. They are always ragged-edged, as it were. And herein lies their essential boyishness. No, Kipling has not got to the heart of the boy as has Kenneth Graham. To have done so would have been his only excuse for expending the treasures of his art and imagination on this literary simulacrum of "Jack Harkaway's Schooldays."

Sir William Jenner's death seems to have attracted little general attention, for to the present generation he was little more than a name. Twenty years ago, however, I remember hearing weird stories of the enormous income he was credited with making. It was then put at something between £25,000 and £30,000 a year. It seems, however, that this was an exaggeration, and, indeed, I am often inclined to think that the stories told concerning the incomes of prominent professional men are, as a rule, very highly coloured. I know myself of one or two barristers who do not average half the annual sums which they are popularly credited with receiving in fees. The £24,000 which Sir Andrew Clark once boasted of having made in one

year was probably the high-water mark of medical incomes. A professional associate of Jenner declares that his income during his most successful years ranged between £12,000 and £15,000, and never went beyond the latter sum. Of course he did not take into account exceptional fees, of which Sir William had two, each of 5,000 guineas, and both paid him by Americans. The first was paid him for going to Scotland, and the second was sent to him by an American for seeing his son at Brighton. It was by the mileage payments for country consultations, however, that Jenner made so much money. He never raised his town consultation fee from the usual two guineas, but he once took 1,000 guineas in a day in country journeys.

W——, who has just returned from a semi-business journey from British Columbia, told me last night a story he had heard from a travelling companion on the Canadian Pacific which is suggestive of negro character. The narrator was a Southerner,

and the story dates back to slavery times. A series of revival meetings had been held on his father's estate, and it was to end up with the distribution of the sacrament to the converts and the regular church members at the cross roads contiguous to three or four plantations. On the Saturday night the old negro preacher called upon the father of W——'s friend with the humble request that he would provide the sacramental wine. "Certainly, George, certainly," said the planter. "Let me see, what shall I give you? Will a bottle of port be the thing?" "Well, sah, I dunno," said George, scratching his grizzled pate in a dubious manner; "I dunno. Yo' see the ladies ob de congregashun held a meetin' larse night to consider the subject, and the consenshous ob opinion seemed to be that the mos' correct thing would be a bottle of gin!"

Yours as ever,

CHARLES TOWNLEY.

Baron Ferdinand de Rothschild.

SO lately as the 20th of August last, in our series of illustrated articles on "Country Homes and Gardens," we included Waddesdon Manor, the beautiful house in Buckinghamshire which Baron Ferdinand de Rothschild had built on the lines of a French chateau from the design of M. Detalleur, a member of a family which may be described as having an hereditary right to the post of architect to the Dukes of Orleans; and we noted also the gardens laid out by M. Laisné. Now the master of this modern paradise—for Waddesdon is a place beautiful beyond compare—has passed away. Born in Paris in 1839, he can hardly be said to have attained a ripe old age, and his death was sudden and unexpected. It has come as a shock upon Society at large, and it has been felt widely and deeply. On public life, it may be, Baron Ferdinand de Rothschild made no very profound impression, for he was that invaluable and rare adjunct of the House of Commons—a silent, thoughtful, and conscientious member. But by the highest class of Society, beginning with the Prince of Wales and ending with everybody who knew anything worth knowing of art, of literature, and of politics, he will be sorely missed, and no man who ever was privileged to be one of the chosen guests at Waddesdon during one of those Saturday to Monday gatherings in which the master of the house delighted, is likely to forget the pleasure which the visit gave to him.

Baron Ferdinand de Rothschild—his friends always called him Ferdy—was a man of many sides and of many tastes, and all his tastes were cultivated and refined, and his great wealth enabled him to indulge them all. His gardens, the well-considered result of artistic thought, were a dream of beauty; for that matter, they are so still, for callous Nature reckons nothing whether the man who encouraged her be dead or no. His house, of which we



J. Thomson,

70a, Grosvenor St.

THE LATE BARON.

reproduce one picture without apology, was in exquisite taste; and the treasures within it were and are without number. No man ever possessed a brighter taste in matters artistic, or could indulge it more easily, than the owner of Waddesdon. That which was gloomy he could by no means tolerate, and he had the rare courage to say so, even of so great a painter as Rembrandt. But of Van Dyck and Van Eyck, of Gainsborough and Sir Joshua, he was an ardent admirer, and of Dutch and French pictures he made a wonderful collection.

As a collector of artistic objects other than pictures he had no rival, and the bureau and clock combined, which he had bought for £40,000 from Mr. George Fitzwilliam, may almost be reckoned among the wonders of the world. Man of letters he was also, the most elegant of French scholars, and his few published works, notably "Personal Characteristics from French History" (Macmillan), are marked with refinement and care. To him in his character of philanthropist a good cause seldom looked in vain. Finally, he was something of a sportsman, and took a keen interest in yachting. Certainly few of those who had the luck to meet him last autumn, when he paid a flying visit to Amsterdam in his yacht with Lord Rosebery, can have dreamed that the man who seemed so full of life and interest, was soon to be numbered among the dead. Yet so Fate has ordained, and nothing

is left to us except to mourn, and to reflect how useful a man he was in his wealthy and unostentatious way, how he encouraged the Arts, how he came to the aid of the poor, and how, eight years ago, he had the honour of entertaining the Queen at Waddesdon. The offices he held in England were not many, but one of them was specially appropriate. He was a director of the British Museum, a position for which he was admirably fitted.



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WADDESDON MANOR.

"COUNTRY LIFE."